

Japanese Culture Program

No.11

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.

しよどうきようしつ
書道教室

Shodo Class



いばなきようしつ
生け花教室

Ikebana Class



きようしつ
きもの教室

Kimono-Wearing 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. Students 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 Sosho 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.oharyu.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

It was fun. Thank you very much for teaching me how to arrange the flowers and how to peel the main branch.



I am glad I had the opportunity to experience ikebana. I learned two ways of ikebana. The teacher kindly taught us the basics of ikebana and how to arrange the flowers to make them look appealing. I recommend it if you want a traditional Japanese experience.



Kimono-Wearing 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-Wearing 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-Wearing 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

Q : What kind of student were you when you were a student at Ochanomizu University?

A : (If you had any interactions with international students at that time, I would be very grateful if you could mention them to me.)
As a native of a rural area, I was very interested in having a life in Tokyo, which I 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 high technology of dyeing, weaving, and embroidery, as well as the coordination of obi (belt) and small

The charm of kimono dressing is that you can feel the seasons by coordinating obis 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 center 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 a student in a club decide that they want to wear their own hakama for their graduation ceremony, they often say, "I've worked so hard to get this far, and now I can wear it well. I am impressed that they have worked so hard to get this 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 Kimono.



2 The instructor teaches how to lace up an obi and then students try doing it.



3 The instructor helps to fit the difficult parts.



6 Learning how to bow and move.



5 Dressed at last!



4 A finished obi.

Comments from participants



It was so much fun! It was the first time for me to try on a yukata, but I am glad that the teachers and supporters were very kind and taught me how to wear it. I am glad that the teacher and supporters taught me how to wear a yukata so kindly and carefully! It was an important experience for me.



I learned how to wear a yukata and had a lot of fun wearing traditional Japanese clothing. It was the first time for me to wear a yukata. I was happy to wear a yukata for the first time.



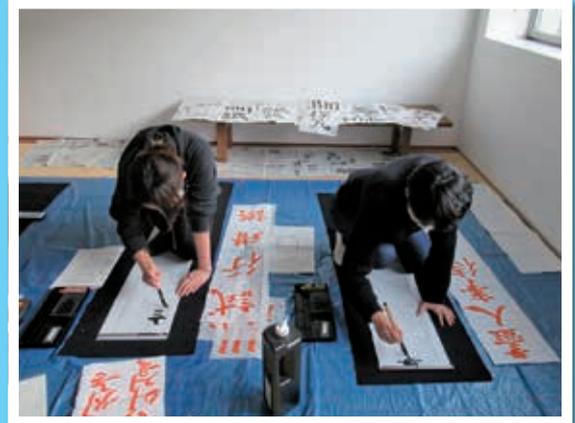
The teacher was very kind and the way she taught was easy to understand. Thank you very much for teaching me how to wear a kimono and how to walk. I have always wanted to try on a kimono and wondered how I would look in one, but this class finally made my dream come true. I was so happy to finally make my dream come true in this class! Thank you very much.



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 write 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.



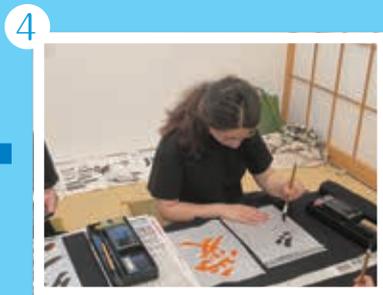
3 Write characters or words you like in line with the teacher's advice.



6 This is our work !



5 We practiced a lot.



4 Students work so seriously !

Comments from participants



It's really interesting.
The teachers are kind.
Thank you very much!



It was fun to write many times in a calm environment. The teachers were very attentive and I was able to complete some difficult characters.



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 learn 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 learn 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 *Kakejiku* and *Ikebana*.



2 A rare opportunity to see hidden aspects of the tea ceremony.



3 The teacher will explain about procedures of the tea ceremony.



6 All satisfied with delicious tea.



5 Making tea by themselves.



4 Enjoying tea with manners.

Comments from participants



Today was fun. I am glad that I was able to learn about and experience the tea ceremony. Thank you very much.



It was a lot of fun. It was my first experience, and I would definitely like to participate in a tea ceremony class again if I have the opportunity.



I enjoyed experiencing the Japanese tea ceremony. The yokans were exquisite and delicious. Thank you very much.



I enjoyed participating in the tea ceremony as I began to understand the various aspects of the "way" of the tea ceremony. The tea was delicious indeed. Thank you very much.



I love tea so much that I drink it every day. I have always wanted to experience Japanese tea culture. Thank you very much for this wonderful experience. I was impressed not only by the tea but also by the respect for tools and artisans.



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 have participated in a Kabuki study group and learned a lot about it. Japanese Kabuki is notorious, but I had never seen it before and had no specific knowledge about it. By participating in this study session, I learned the basics of kabuki, including its history, types, and stage. I am looking forward to Saturday's Kabuki performance to learn more about the differences between traditional Chinese performing arts.



Origami Class (The Art of Paper Folding)

Origami, the Japanese art of folding paper into decorative shapes, is a traditional Japanese pastime. With origami, you can make various figures such as animals, flowers, and even household goods. Origami paper comes in a variety in sizes, prints, and materials, and it gives people enjoyment to create figures using the characteristics of each kind of paper.

In the Origami Class at the Center for International Education, students have made chopstick envelopes, animation characters, seasonal greeting cards, and so on. It is a good opportunity to try making wonderful paper crafts using your creativity. Please join us and have fun!



Comments from participants

The pieces we made of were very beautiful. It made me feel better just by looking at it. Even while we were folding, it was enjoyable and amusing.



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, writing our favorite characters.



Comments from participants



Everybody's awesome! It was fun!



I want to participate in events like this one. And in the Manga club!



I really enjoyed it. I enjoyed drawing pictures and talking with students.

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 music club perform famous Japanese pieces.



Participants are experiencing the performance of the koto.

Comments from participants



It was more fun than I thought it would be. It was over in the blink of an eye and I wanted to play more.



It was a very valuable experience. It was the first time for me to touch a koto. I wanted to completely learn the song "Sakura" and play it. Everyone in the koto club is very good at playing the koto. I have never seen or heard of the koto until now, so I enjoyed today's experience.

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 Ms. Hanako Shimada

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.

On the day of the event



1 Learn about the history and tradition of Kodo.



3 Making an aroma bag.



2 Actually listen to the fragrance.



Comments from participants



The smell reminded me of a fragrance in Taiwan. It was very interesting. I want to participate in more events like this.



I have always been interested in Kodo, so it was a lot of fun to experience it!



I was able to deepen my knowledge and understanding of Kodo by learning about its history and the way it is used today. I realized that the culture and power of Kodo have permeated into familiar places, and I thought that I could lead a richer life by being aware of such aspects in the future.

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-wearing 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.

In the first semester of 2022, we held a Spanish course, and in the second semester, we held a Swedish course.



Swedish language class in the second semester

Comments from participants



I enjoyed learning not only the Swedish language but also a little bit about Swedish culture. I could understand the meaning of the lesson because it was taught in a mixture of Swedish, English, and Japanese. Thank you very much.

I am now more interested in the Swedish language than ever before. I am going to study Swedish little by little after the course is over. I enjoyed Swedish sweets so much that I want to go to IKEA and buy Swedish sweets. I also became interested in culture, for instance, festivals and food. I would like to experience the Swedish way of spending Christmas because it is different from the Japanese way.



Comments from the instructor



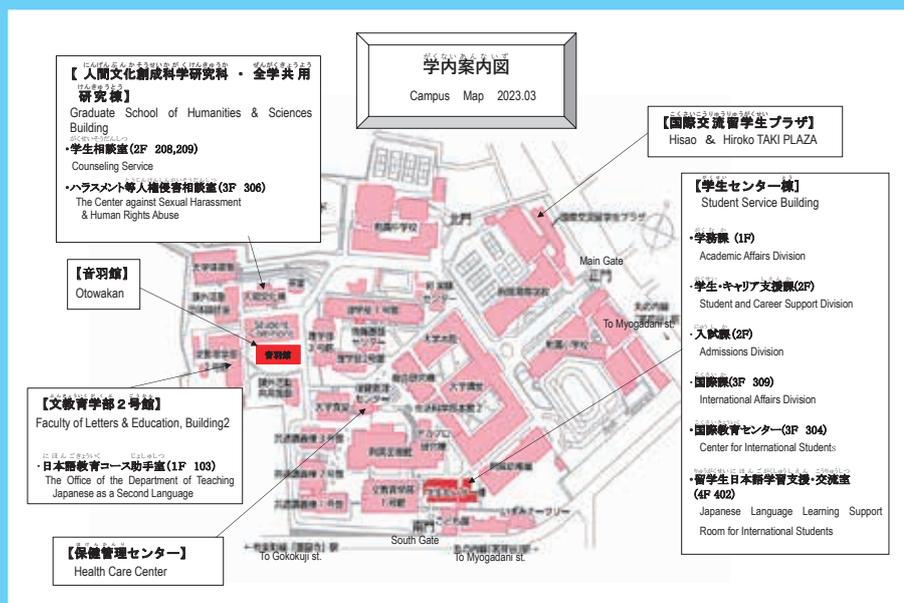
I am glad that I was given the chance to become a teacher. It was a good experience. Many students were interested in Sweden, and I enjoyed teaching them. It was difficult to teach a language from the beginner level. Therefore, I thought it would be more enjoyable to teach not only the language but also the culture. I think the students also enjoyed it. I would like to thank all of the students who participated this semester, as well as the tea ceremony university and the teachers for giving us this opportunity. Thank you very much!

Annual schedule

	Culture program	Foreign language class	Public lectures
May	● Kodo class	● Foreign language class ①	
June	● Kabuki appreciation class ● Ikebana class ● Shodo class		
July	● Sado class ● Yukata class		
October			
November		● Foreign language class ②	
December	● Manga class ● Ikebana class ● Origami class		
January	● Shodo class ● Kimono-wearing class ● Koto class		
February			● Public lecture ● International Student Forum

* 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/index.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, I realized once again that the Cultural Affairs Department has been sustained by the cooperation of many people. I 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. I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the teachers and assistants in the culture class who taught me, and to Zeinab Naderpour for the English translations.

The Center for International Education Lee Hyeasook, Nagata Saki,
Goo Hyunmin, Liu Yelin

Publication

The Center for International Education, Ochanomizu University

Building for Student Affairs, 3rd floor 304

2-1-1 Otsuka, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 112-8610 Japan

TEL/FAX: +81-3-5978-5965

Book binding , Printing

Yoshimi Kohsan

Hongo Miyata Building, 3rd floor

3-26-1 Hongo, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 113-0033 Japan

TEL: +81-3-5802-5601 FAX: +81-3-5802-5603