

Unlocking a New World: Discover Japan, Embrace Diversity

Exchange Semester Experience Spring 2024 ~ August 2024

Universite Le Havre Normandie, France



Coming to Japan represented for me a desire that I had had for a long time, a desire that I was able to realize at Yokohama National University. Asia is a region that is located far from where I live, the social codes are different there, particularly in Japan, which has the particularity of being an archipelago making the country unique in its kind. Coming to Yokohama allowed me to expand my knowledge of the region and the culture of Japan, which is a society that is structured very differently from French society. This allowed me to open my mind to a new way of thinking with morals very different from mine. I was also able to discover Japanese daily life and push my limits by adapting to this new life.

The programs offered were very diversified with a range of interesting course choices with courses on the history of Japan and Yokohama, economics courses or quite simply on the culture of Japan by addressing the problems and challenges that the country crosses, computer courses and then without forgetting of course, Japanese courses adapted to all levels. The courses offered by Joy program allowed me to learn more about the culture and gave me knowledge directly from Japanese teachers. Some courses are in common with the Japanese student program, allowing everyone's points of view to be compared, not only between university exchange students and foreign students from around the world. But also, with local students from several regions of Japan offering an extraordinary paradigm of thought, representing a unique opportunity to exchange and meet. The Japanese classes allowed me to learn more about the language, there was a very good atmosphere between the students and the teachers allowing a learning environment where I was able to deepen my knowledge more effectively. Various events were organized, including meetings with Japanese people through workshops which put our knowledge acquired in Japanese during the course to the test, allowing us to practice and exchange again. I was also able to participate in other events and in particular a visit to the Yokohama disaster center addressing the risks of natural disasters in Japan by teaching us the actions to follow in the event that it happens, all with a little history, and then a visit to a mosque addressing the place of ethnic and religious minorities in Japan.

Life on campus is just as pleasant, it offers a diverse environment with infrastructures for studying and a diverse choices of lunch meals, there is something for everyone. Despite an out-of-the-way campus, Food

trucks and several convenient stores are present nearby allowing you to lack for nothing with also various restaurants and train stations located within a 20-minute walk. The campus is directly served by bus lines connecting the city center in less than 30 minutes. Its eccentricity also makes it possible to offer small corners of nature which tend to be rare in the city center. It is very wooded and offers small corners of relaxation in the shade during the spring and summer days of Japan. A residence is made available to foreigners coming to study in Japan but also available to Japanese students. There are private and shared accommodations, shared accommodations include eight private rooms with a kitchen and bathroom shared with different world and Japanese students offering a unique opportunity to share your culture and the culture of your roommates.

JOY program represented for me the project of a lifetime, it offered me the opportunity to come study in Japan and discover a country that I had until then fantasized about. While I was not used to traveling until then, I surpassed my own limits and was able to easily adapt to this new world for me. I have emerged from this experience, which has given me a lot both educationally and personally. I had the opportunity to meet a lot of people, to travel and above all to learn.