

My Experience in the JOY Program at YNU

Exchange Semester Experience Fall 2025 ~ February 2026

Baden-Wuerttemberg Cooperative State University, Germany



Participating in the JOY program at Yokohama National University has been a truly enriching and memorable experience, both academically and personally. From the moment I arrived in Japan, I felt well supported by the university and welcomed into an international learning environment that encouraged curiosity, independence, and cultural exchange.

Academically, YNU offered a wide range of courses that allowed me to deepen my knowledge while also exploring new perspectives. The classes were well structured, and professors were approachable and supportive, even when language or academic styles differed from what I was used to at my home university. Studying alongside Japanese students and other international exchange students gave me valuable insight into different ways of thinking and learning. I especially appreciated the emphasis on discussion, critical thinking, and real-world application in many courses.

Beyond academics, daily life in Yokohama was one of the highlights of my exchange. The city is vibrant, international, and very livable, with a perfect balance between urban energy and relaxed waterfront areas. Living in Japan allowed me to experience the culture firsthand—from everyday routines like shopping and commuting, to seasonal events, local festivals, and traditional customs. These experiences helped me grow more confident and independent while adapting to a new environment.

The JOY program also provided many opportunities to connect with others. Through orientation events, campus activities, and informal interactions, I was able to make friends from Japan and all over the world. These connections made my time at YNU especially meaningful and helped me feel part of the university community. I found that Japanese students were welcoming and curious, and conversations often turned into valuable cultural exchanges.

Administrative and support systems at YNU were reliable and well organized. The international office and related staff were always helpful when I had questions regarding procedures, documents, or daily life matters. This support made it much easier to focus on my studies and enjoy my time in Japan.

Overall, my experience in the JOY program at Yokohama National University was extremely rewarding. It strengthened my academic interests, broadened my global perspective, and gave me unforgettable memories and friendships. I would highly recommend this program to students who are interested in studying in Japan, challenging themselves academically, and experiencing life in a truly international setting.