

SSIP2024 Activity Logs

This is the log that the program assistant interns wrote during the program.
Content and Theme for “Japanese Studies” and “Cross-Cultural Workshop” are subject to
change.

SSIP 2024 Opening Ceremony and Welcome Party (6/18)



The second SSIP after COVID-19 started this year, following last year. Despite the unfortunate heavy rain, we were able to hold the opening ceremony, orientation, and welcome party except for the campus tour.

At the opening ceremony, Chancellor Mariko Bando gave a few words, followed by introductions of the participating international students, CCW students, and staff as well as the interns.

The orientation session that followed touched on the history of Showa Women's University, an overview of SSIP, and talked about other important things. The campus was introduced based on the map depicted in the file that was distributed.



The welcome party that followed began with a toast along with drinks and snacks. Since international students came from various countries, they introduced each other about the toast of their own countries. After that, self-introductions were made, and hobbies, majors, etc. were reintroduced, which seemed to deepen the understanding among participating students. During the ice-breaker activities such as Bingo, Word Wolf, and message games, the participating international students seemed to deepen their friendship not only with each other but also with CCW students. We gave rewards to the students who got bingo faster, we're glad that they liked them!

Japan in Films and CCW starts! (6/19)



The first class day of the SSIP program started on June 19th! Before taking a class, the students watched a film which is called "Tokyo Story." The film was black and white, so it can be imagined that the film is very old. Although the film was for 2 hours, the students focused on it the whole time. After watching the film, everyone discussed the movie from different perspectives. The film, about postwar Japan, made them think deeply about the image of the Japanese family and many people seemed to like it.



After the film class, they had their first Cross-Cultural Workshop. International students and Showa students interacted with each other and tried to make good relationships. The class mainly included some icebreakers to talk about themselves. For example, they did Jankenressya, name-remembering games, chocolate confessions, etc. In particular, they got excited when they did name-remembering games! Thanks to that ice-breaking, we hope that they can get to know each other and start to make deep relationships.

Kabuki Performance (6/20)



We went to the “Sun-Pearl Arakawa” hall to watch a Kabuki performance. We took a local train called “Tokyo Sakura Tram” on the way to the theater, which was such a nice experience for the students. At the theater, in addition to a free audio guide, English subtitles were shown on the top of the stage, so they were helpful to understand the Kabuki performance well.

3 Topics on Japan Studies (6/21)



The first class was “Japanese Economy and Labor Market”, which was conducted by Professor Yashiro. He talked about the Japanese economy including the Japanese population, age of first marriage, and stable unemployment. Also he compared how women work after maternity and paternity leave and the pressure to take those breaks with other countries, and actually asked about these situations to students in their countries.

In the third period, students learned about Japanese tourism and hospitality. Everyone was interested in the teacher's questions about cultural differences based on his experiences. We did a pair work activity in which participants completed a picture without speaking to themselves in order to experience the flexibility required for hospitality. Everyone seemed to enjoy the activity and learned the importance of being sensitive to others' feelings and responding on the spot.



In the fourth period, they had a class about traditional performing arts”Kabuki.” Professor Oyatsu talked about the origin and the history behind Kabuki and also reviewed the characters and story of the Kabuki performance we saw yesterday. Some students asked questions actively and gave feedback. In particular, students wondered why all performers are male or why performers are white.

We hope that this lecture gave insight and new perspectives on Japanese culture!

CCW Classes 3~5 (6/22)



On June 22nd, the students joined the Cross-cultural workshop with SWU students conducted by Professor Omura. Today, the members of each group to engage in fieldwork were announced, and they were split into 9 groups.

First, they introduced themselves and then went outside to do a photo scavenger hunt with group members. They worked together to complete tasks and then went on to discuss how to plan and work on their fieldwork sessions.



Lecture on Education System (6/24)



Today the students learned about the Japanese Education System while also discussing differences between their own countries' education systems! A few videos were played showing what a typical day in a Japanese elementary school looks like—From different class periods to how lunch is handled. The students seemed intrigued in learning about various aspects of the Japanese Education system before it was turned to them to discuss differences between their own countries.

With Nine participating countries, there was a good amount of variety as students discussed what the timeline for education looked like. Comparing the different ages that students enter certain schools and entrance exams sparked some conversation as there was quite a difference.



Towards the end of class, the students were asked to write down a few good things about their country's education system before going around the class and comparing them with others. It seemed that most students valued different aspects of their education, ranging from social, financial and also just the content of what they got to learn. Everyone walked away knowing not only more about the Japanese Education

System but also each other's education systems, contributing to a more cultural understanding of one another.

Food Sample Making and Lecture on Religion (6/25)



Today, the students went to Kita-Ikebukuro in the morning to participate in making food sample parfaits! The staff were extremely kind and everyone got to pick out their decorations for their parfait and the color of their gelatin sauce! The students were natural, making the cream seem almost lifelike. By the end of the activity, everyone took photos of their treats, proud of how lifelike they turned out.

Next we allowed the students to take their free time at a station over in Ikebukuro, and most chose to go to Sunshine City because of its plethora of stores and restaurants. Everyone seemed to enjoy the freedom to look around the shopping district before returning to campus for a lecture from Fujimori sensei on Religious Views in Japan.



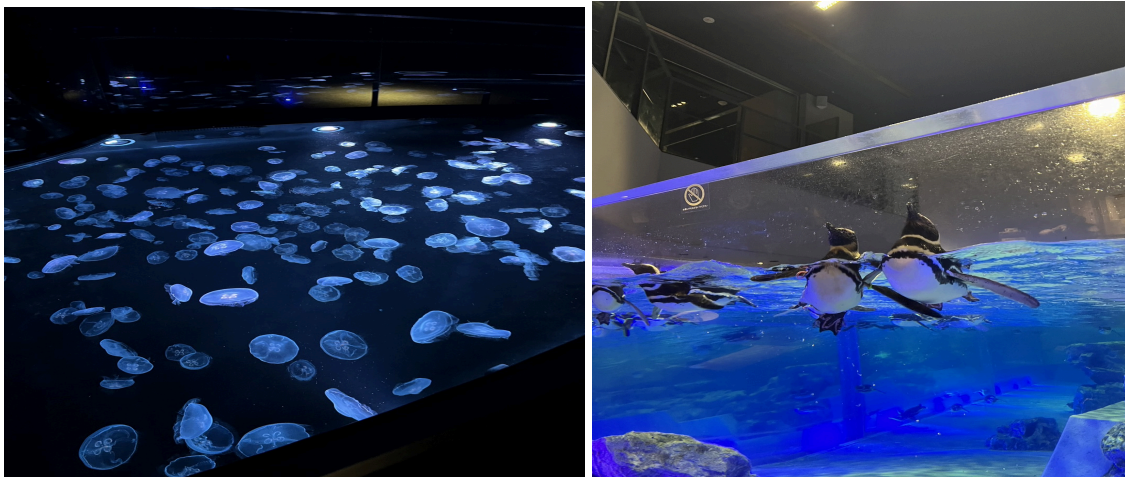
The students seemed engaged with this topic, as Fujimori sensei was very enthusiastic while teaching the class. Learning about the unique situation in Japan, and the incorporation of diverse religious elements into culture, really fascinated the students!

Sky Tree and Asakusa Sight-Seeing (6/26)



On 26th June, we went to the Tokyo Skytree and Sumida Aquarium.

Half of the students went to the Tokyo Skytree and enjoyed the view! Unfortunately, we could not see the scenery clearly, but they found some famous spots from the tower, such as Sensou Temple and Tokyo Tower.



The group that went to the aquarium was healed by the fantastic space! Students seeing not only jellyfish and fish but also mammals such as penguins and seals. In the penguin area, we could see the penguins eating, and everyone had a great time!



After going to the Tokyo Skytree or the Sumida Aquarium, some extended their cultural adventure to the Soramachi area and/or Asakusa. They ate some Japanese food in Asakusa and enjoyed the old Japanese culture!

Tea Ceremony and Calligraphy (6/27)



First, they enjoyed the Japanese culture by learning about Tea Ceremony!

Most students said this was the first time they experienced the Tea Ceremony.

However, they carefully listened to the instructions and tried making green tea.

Some students seemed to feel that green tea was too bitter, but they were interested in the tradition and the zen mind behind the whole art.

Some students asked, "Why do they need to wear white socks in the tea room?" or "Are there any differences between the kimono

that the teacher wore and the normal one?" There were questions that Japanese students didn't know the answers too, and was helpful for the SWU students to acknowledge their own culture.



The next class was Japanese Calligraphy! Amemiya Sensei and the Calligraphy students took great care in teaching the students how to draw kanji elegantly.

Everyone seemed very interested in practicing many times to get a better understanding of how to properly hold the brush and perform certain strokes. By the end of the class, everyone was smiling and laughing about the improvements they'd made over the short amount of time. Some students wished we could stay longer, but everyone seemed to admire the fans containing their favorite kanji character(s) on them!



In the 4th period class, they had a class on "Japanese Pop Culture."

Professor Shigematsu talked about Japanese culture, focusing on manga and anime.

They interacted with Showa students who took that class and enjoyed sharing their opinions. Some student's first contact with Japanese culture was manga and anime, so they enjoyed sharing their views and favorite work.

Ghibli Museum (6/28)



On June 28th, we went to the Ghibli Museum! Although it was a rainy day, we enjoyed this museum inside.

First, we watched the short original animation related to the Ghibli film "Howl's Moving Castle." It was in Japanese, but the students enjoyed it, especially those who are big fans of Studio Ghibli Anime and Movies!!

The Exhibitions showcased Director Hayao Miyazaki's works, and some students enjoyed the souvenir shop! There was a Giant Robot from the film "Castle in the Sky" on the rooftop, which was a great photo spot!



After the museum, we traveled to SWU's off-campus facility "Tomei Gakurin," for a CCW camp. We had our first group meal and some of the students tried the communal bath for the first time, and they said it was nice! We also had a fun night, we played some card games such as slapjack, spoons, and memory games! We were glad that the international students and the SWU CCW students got closer to each other!

Tomei Gakurin Day 1 (6/29)



After finishing breakfast, the students worked on some team-building activities and training games that were aimed at realizing intercultural communication skills.

In the afternoon, each group went on discussing a theme to give the final presentation on, did a short rehearsal and worked on how to make their presentations better.

While working hard, students took breaks to enjoy the spectacular view outside from Tomei and feel nature. The view was a complete change from the heart of Tokyo, but both had their good qualities.

At night, we went out to the parking lot and enjoyed fireworks! It was the first time many students used hand-held fireworks, and they were excited! Some students seemed intimidated by the sound of fireworks soaring high into the sky, but once the fireworks blossomed, everyone's smiles shone brightly.



Tomei Gakurin Day 2 (6/30)

As the second day of Tomei started, everyone was buzzing about conversations and games from the night before. Fireworks were still fresh on their mind as students joined up with their groups to finalize their presentations. After class, groups of students went outside to explore the surroundings of Tomei, having fun in the bamboo and enjoying the abundant nature. As the day went on, it was time for the watermelon smashing event, where students kept on volunteering each other to go up and whack at the watermelon. After all was set everyone enjoyed some fresh watermelon, grinning from ear to ear as it was all devoured by the students.



When evening turned to night, everyone came to try on yukata! It was quite a process with everyone choosing colors matching colors for their clothing as well as the obi. After everyone was dressed, we surprised them with a small fireworks show using some we had hidden for the occasion. Photos were taken, memories were made, and that had concluded the last night at Tomei. Everyone seemed a bit melancholic about leaving, as they'd grown to love the scenery at Tomei but also wished to see Mt. Fuji which never emerged from the clouds...



Kamakura Trip (7/1)

On the last day of Tomei, we had our last breakfast and said goodbye to the sweet workers there. After leaving Tomei, we went to see Kamakura Daibutsu at Kotoku-in. It was a rainy day, but the Daubutsu with many umbrellas looked tasteful. Some of the students went inside of the Daibutsu. It was such a nice experience, even for interns, since it's rare to be able to go inside!



Afterward, we went to Kamakura City. The students were free to go around, and it seemed like they were enjoying the historical vibes of Kamakura. Especially some of them were happy that they got to eat matcha! We went to eat soba, which was served with tempura, and it was really yummy! Almost all of our journey ended on this day... Time flies so fast, but the lovely memories that we made together will never disappear forever...<3



Last day (7/3)



Finally, we came to the last day of SSIP! Some students went to the Global Lounge earlier and practiced their presentation. They said that they were so nervous, but they succeeded in making great presentations. They are from several countries and have various backgrounds, so we noticed the different aspects of Japanese culture.



After the presentations, we held a closing ceremony and a farewell party. They were glad to finish this program, but most students felt sad about saying goodbye to their peers. Sam and Tanyo, who made speeches in the closing ceremony, said they got several aspects of thoughts and made unforgettable memories through this international exchange! At the farewell party, international and SWU students enjoyed discussing their memories of SSIP. Although we might never meet with all members of SSIP, I wish them happiness!

