

Kyoto Summer Program 2016 with KU students (for East Asian Students) (31 July - 13 August)

The Kyoto Summer Program 2016 with KU students for East Asian Students, a short-term study-abroad program hosted by Kyoto University's Institute for Liberal Arts and Sciences (ILAS), took place from 31 July through 13 August with 25 selected students participating. The program was organized by ILAS in conjunction with the Kyoto Prefecture Office and the Kyoto Prefecture International Center, which offers cultural tours and activities for students from other countries, and with cooperation from Kyoto University's Asian Studies Unit (KUASU). Participants in this year's Summer Program included undergraduate and master's students with a variety of academic interests from Peking University, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, National Taiwan University, and Yonsei University in South Korea.

The Kyoto Summer Program invites outstanding students from leading East Asian universities to experience Kyoto University's unique academic climate and cutting-edge research environment, and to learn about various aspects of the host country, from politics and history to culture and ecology. The program aims to stimulate interest among students in East Asia to study in Japan for longer periods, to contribute to the promotion of international understanding, and ultimately to foster regional peace and stability. Kyoto University students attended program lectures together with the international students, and even planned part of the program which are expected to improve their planning and management capabilities.

The first half of the program included a courtesy visit to Kyoto's Prefectural Hall, where visiting students were greeted by Vice-Governor Shuichi Yamauchi and briefed on the prefectural government's integrated plan for Kyoto's future, called "Tomorrow's Kyoto," which constitutes a new pillar of Kyoto's administrative management, before touring the assembly hall.

At Kyoto University, the students attended lectures on a range of topics, including: "Human mind viewed from the study of chimpanzees" by Professor Tetsuro Matsuzawa of Kyoto University Institute for Advanced Study, "Current situation and prospects of research and technologies on food, environment, and life in the world" by Professor Naoshi Kondo of the Graduate School of Agriculture, "History and culture of Kyoto" by Associate Professor Niels van Steenpaal of the Graduate School of Education, "Japanese sense of beauty" by Associate Professor Sikiko Yukawa of ILAS, and "Space and politics: politician's private villas in modern Japan" by Professor Souchi Naraoka of the Graduate School of Law.

The second half of the program consisted of field trips to various locations across the prefecture and designed to introduce the participants to the traditional cultures of Japan in general and Kyoto in particular. Places visited included: a leading company in the egg grading and packing industry, NABEL Co., Ltd., the Suntory Beer Factory, Shichijyo-Kanshundo, where participants experienced the art of making Japanese sweets, a farm in Nantan City where students harvested and cooked Kyoto's local heirloom vegetables, and Kayabuki-no-sato Kitamura village, where students strolled among thatched-roof houses and took part in *mochi* (rice cake) pounding.

Joining the participants during the summer week were about a dozen Kyoto University students who actively contributed to the program as supporters. The Summer School proved to be a valuable opportunity for students from all universities to improve cross-cultural understanding, foreign-language proficiency, and international relationship skills.

Even in this short period of time, visiting students gained information and a deepened understanding of Kyoto University and Japan and are able to transmit this back to their home countries. Several of the visiting students who participated in the program have also since shown an interest in returning to Japan for their postgraduate studies. By serving to increase contacts between the next generations of leaders, it is hoped that this program and similar initiatives will contribute to increased mutual understanding in East Asia.



Courtesy visit to the Kyoto [Prefectural](#) vice-governor Shuichi Yamauchi



Lecture by Professor Tetsuro Matsuzawa



Mochi (rice cake) Pounding



Final Presentation



Completion ceremony