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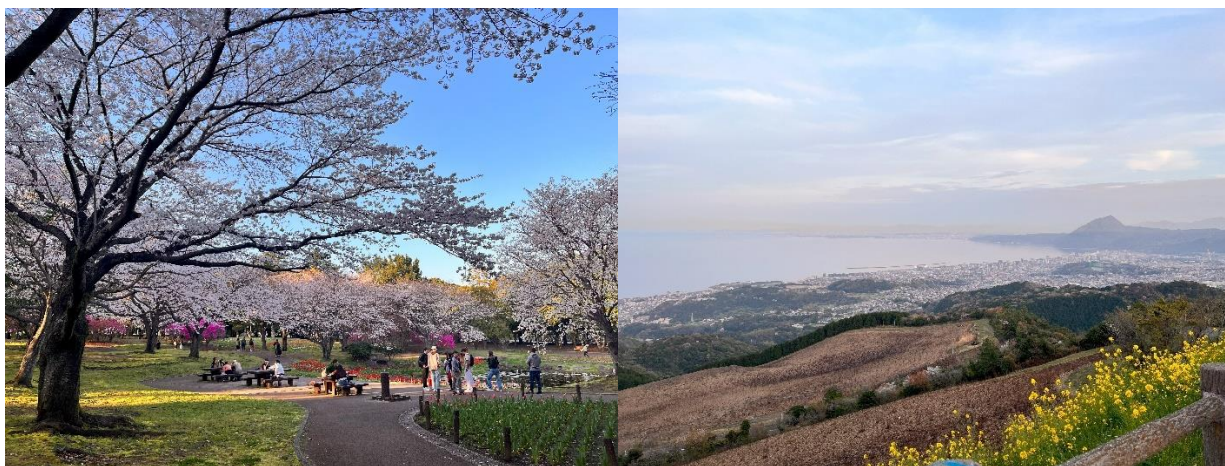
Spring Term 2022-23 Chan Wing Sum



Monthly Activity Log

March

There are three assigned days for check-in in late March. APU offers airport pick-up so everything was smooth and easy. After arrival, I visited places like Beppu Park and Oita city to watch the cherry blossoms. I also did the Japanese placement test at APU and attended the opening ceremony of the spring term. Fireworks at night were quite stunning to watch.



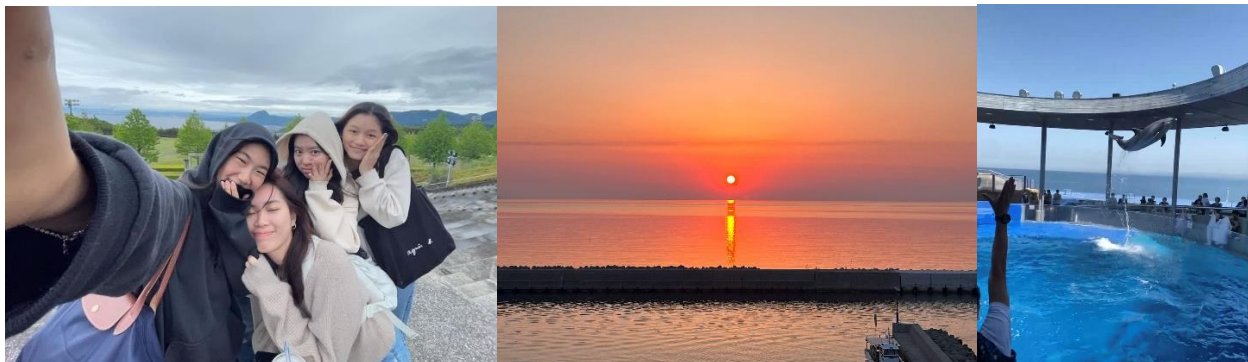
April

Before the start of spring term, I visited Yufuin with my friends, a famous tourist spot in Beppu. I also experienced the Onsen matsuri (hot spring festival) with my exchange buddy. The event is held to give thanks to the rich hot springs of Beppu. It was fun and memorable as you will be splashed by Onsen water. After that, I continued to explore different places within Beppu city, such as Zipline. It was thrilling to conquer between tall trees but relaxing at the same time when you were surrounded by green plants.



May

May is a plain and busy month for me since it is the ending of the first semester. Also, courses in APU are quite strict when it comes to attendance so I was unable to explore a lot of places. Still, I had fun hanging out with my friends and enjoy the simple life in Japanese campus. I also had some new experiences this month, such as playing baseball, stone spa and outdoor Onsen.



June

In the semester break, I planned a long trip with my friends that travel across Nagoya, Kyoto and Osaka. We spent most of our time in Kyoto. In this city, you can experience traditional culture of Japan through the craftsmanship of temples and traditional cuisine. We visited Kifune Shrine, Togetsukyo Bridge and more. At the end of the trip, we took the ferry from Osaka back to Beppu. It took 12 hours but time flew once you fell asleep. Also, I joined the day trip organized by exchange buddies to visit Aso of Kumamoto. The natural scenery is stunning.



July

July is the start of a series of summer festivals. They offer a bunch of food booths, traditional performances and fireworks. It is a great chance to experience Japanese culture. I went to two “matsuri” at Beppu and Oita respectively. I also went for a 3-days trip to Shikoku by ferry. I visited some sites from the film “Suzume”. The costal views are relaxing and beautiful. That was my favorite trip throughout the exchange period. At the end of July, APU buddies organized farewell party. We had pizza and lucky draw. It was a fun night.



August

For the last month, I visited Korea with a friend, had a short stay in Fukuoka and traveled around Kyushu with my family. It takes less than an hour to fly from Fukuoka to Seoul. I finally understand why there are so many Korean tourists in Fukuoka. Also, I finished the last thing in my bucket list, which is watching a baseball match. The atmosphere was so good which everyone was cheering to the players. I enjoyed it so much. For the Kyushu trip, we visited Nagasaki, Kumamoto, Oita and Fukuoka. It was a fruitful journey since I experience different aspects of Kyushu, which wrapped up my exchange journey well.



General Information

Visa Procedures

You will receive the certificate of eligibility in Mid-February. After that, you can visit the Visa Application Centre at North Point. The processing time is around one week and you are all set. Remember to pay attention to email from APU!

Orientation Activities

There are several orientation activities in early April before the start of semester. Some are voluntary so you can join according to your needs.

International Services & Activities

You will be assigned to an exchange buddy, who will assist your life in Japan and introduce many activities from the viewpoint of local people. Also, APU buddy and resident assistants of AP House will organize mass events regularly. They are great chances for you to meet new friends.

Accommodations

Most exchange students live in AP House 4. There is a chance you are assigned to a room with sea views. There is a common kitchen and laundry room on each floor. The location is convenient as it is close to JR station, various restaurants and shopping center. I personally really like this dorm. It costs around 260,000 yen for 4.5 months (including electricity bill).

Courses Registration

Course registration is done on Campusmate. In my case, there are plenty available slots for business courses. Still, some courses such as tea ceremony are popular choice so you may not be able to enroll into. You can also fill in a course registration form to apply for extra spaces when they are necessary to your graduation. There are two registration periods and correction periods since the semester is divided into two. APU will provide support on the registration day so don't worry about it.

Teaching & Assessment Methods

Assessment are mainly quizzes, in-class exercises, exams, group projects. For group projects, the project group size is usually 10 people so the workload is relatively low. To compare, professors here use more videos to assist teaching in the class. Generally, I think the difficulty and workload is lower than UST.

Sports & Recreation Facilities

There is a gymnasium on the campus and one downtown that some club activities will be held there. You can rent the equipment and play table tennis in AP House 4. Running along the coastal area is also a popular choice.

Finance & Banking

Cash is the main payment method when you dine in a restaurant or buy train tickets. It is recommended to prepare sufficient cash for the entire exchange period before departure since withdrawing cash here involves service fee. I used a mix of credit card and cash throughout the exchange.

Social Clubs & Networking Opportunities

You can join a variety of “circles” here and most of them welcome foreign students. Different circles will hold information booths at APU gymnasium in early April. Remember to ask for more information and apply on that day if you are interested.

Health & Safety

There is a health clinic on the campus. You need to answer a survey about your sickness before the doctor assesses your situation. You will receive some basic treatment and some medicines if applicable. The doctor will provide guidance about the relevant hospital you need. Your health insurance will cover part of the medical fee. Remember to bring the insurance card with you and pay the insurance fee every month. You are also required to do a health check-up in April.

Food

There are various restaurants near AP House 4 including western and east Asia food. There are also 4 supermarkets nearby that sell lunchboxes (bento) and ingredients for you to cook. I usually cook to save money and enjoy fresh Japanese food. There is one canteen and different food trucks on the campus. Choices is limited but the taste is not bad.

Transportation

Transportation is generally expensive in Beppu. To commute to APU, you can buy a triple ticket from APU CO-OP or Oita bus center. It costs 1000 yen for 3 one-way rides. For long-distance journey, you can enjoy discounts if you buy JR tickets online. You will get your tickets through the machine at the station.

Climate

Weather in March and April is still chilly. Especially when the campus is on top of the mountain, remember to bring a jacket with you as temperature can drop rapidly at night. Since Beppu is a coastal city, wind can be strong from time to time. For July and August, the temperature is similar to Hong Kong.

Communication

Line is the major communication tool here. You will be invited into many LINE groups for activities and useful information. Students in APU, including local students, generally can speak English. Still, from my experience, it is easier to make friends if you know conversational Japanese.

Cautionary measures

Although Beppu is relatively safe in terms of natural hazards, it is reminded to be cautious anytime and follow the instructions of AP House or local government during natural disasters. An emergency drill will be done when you first move in.

Other notes

WIFI and internet service are slow in here.

Items to Bring

- ✓ Passport
- ✓ HKID
- ✓ Electricity Adapter
- ✓ USB
- ✓ Laptop
- ✓ Jacket
- ✓ Cash
- ✓ Hair Dryer

Useful Links and Contacts

Course syllabus

<https://portal2.apu.ac.jp/campusp/slbsskgr.do>

Local bus company

<https://www.oitakotsu.co.jp/>

Extracurricular Activity (Clubs and Circles) of APU

<https://en.apu-online.jp/>

JR Kyushu (For online reservations of JR tickets)

<https://www.jrkyushu.co.jp/>