

Akita City, Japan

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Program: University of Akita Exchange, Fall 2017

Major: Business Administration

Earning the Language Immersion Badge:



During my time abroad, I was completely immersed in the Japanese Language. I learned countless everyday phrases from how to order at a restaurant to asking for the time. By simply being in Japan, these types of phrases and conversation elements were practically forced on me. I learned them whether I wanted to or not. But there was also the other end of the spectrum which were words and phrases that I wouldn't have

learned if I didn't intentionally seek them out. In the Japanese language, there are numerous words and phrases that simply don't exist in English. This was one aspect of learning a language that really fascinates me. Learning these nonexistent words was a whole new way to think about life, and I loved it.

Earning the Career Development Badge:



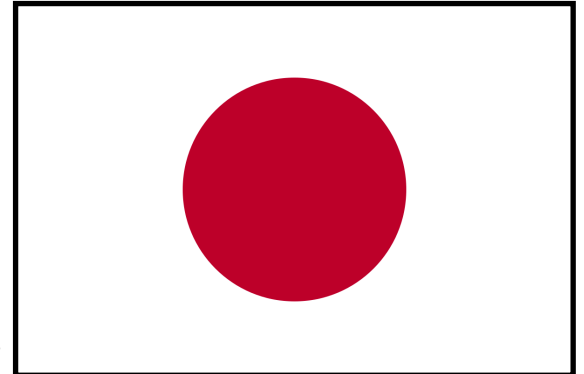
I also gained very valuable career oriented skills while I was in Japan. There is something very special about surrounding yourself with completely new people and completely new places. The way I think about it is, when you're constantly around the same people, it can be easy to get complacent. It's tempting to assume that you fully understand the world and that everyone understands you. You're around the same people all the time and

after a while it becomes very natural to communicate and interact with them. Once you get put into a totally unfamiliar environment you realize that the way you live, speak, and act may seem totally normal, but it's actually very unique. I think the communication skills and perspective shift that this experience gave me will treat me great in my future career where I will most definitely have to interact with new and different people.

Transferable Skills:



One thing that I changed in my life while I was abroad was getting involved in my community and with my school. In Japan, I didn't have any friends to start with, and I wanted that to change. I'm not the most outgoing person in the world, so I had to really force myself to get out of my comfort zone and put myself in situations where making friends was easiest. So I joined clubs and organizations and sat by strangers at lunch. What I learned about myself from this is that I love meeting new people and I love getting involved with my community. This has inspired me to be more outgoing and friendly and to join organizations on campus.



“My learning abroad experience opened my eyes to so many different perspectives and ways of living, but I think the most important thing it helped me to realize was that I know very little about myself.”

