

JCMU Experience (1 credit)

**The Japan Center for Michigan Universities
Hikone, Shiga JAPAN
In affiliation with Michigan State University
Fall 2019
Professor: Benjamin J. McCracken, Esq.**

Thursdays from 13:00 to 13:50 (or as explained in the syllabus)

Office: 116 Academic Building

Office Hours: By appointment

Office Phone x 6116

E-mail: bmccracken@jcmu.net

Course Description: The purpose of the JCMU Experience course is to help students develop strategies for thriving in Japan and beyond. Students will learn valuable skills including intercultural communications strategies, cultural shock awareness, and acculturation strategies. These skills will help students enjoy their time in Japan. Students will also learn and develop skills that will enable them to reflect on their experiences and use them for future employment.

Instruction objectives include:

1. To learn more about and be able to compare one's own cultural and traditions through comparative inquiries of Japan.
2. To learn and practice techniques for cultural understanding and intercultural communications.
3. To gain skills to facilitate inquiry into globalization and its impacts from the perspectives of others.
4. Learn life skills that will allow students to make use of their study abroad experiences in a more meaningful way.

Course Requirements/ Assignments and Evaluations

- ◆ **Punctuality and Attendance:** Students are required to attend all lecture meetings, field observations, and other scheduled events programmed for this course. Excessive tardiness to class and class activities may result in the dismissal of a student from a program.
- ◆ **Absence Policy:** Your attendance is very important not only to you but also to other classmates. Due to the nature of Study Abroad, no unannounced absences will be permitted. Please refer Office of Study Abroad for further details (<http://studyabroad.msu.edu>). Your tardiness may be counted as 1/2 unexcused absence. Excessive unexcused absences may result in dismissal from the course.
- ◆ **Preparation and Participation:** Students are expected to be prepared and participate. Students are expected to prepare for class by completing the reading assignments and

preparing for selected discussion topics prior to attending class. Participation is a key element to your success in this course. Class discussion and interactivity with the class as a whole is critical to developing an awareness of the content described in lectures and readings. Students that are not prepared will be asked to leave the class and will be marked as absent. Participation constitutes 20% of your grade.

Journal: Students will receive a journal/planner in which they will keep notes on what they are experiencing. This journal/planner will be 50% of the total grade and will be checked weekly.

Required Reading: Readings will be assigned as needed

Academic Honesty and Classroom Etiquette

Students should always value academic honesty in their own work. In addition to other things, plagiarism is considered among the most blatant forms of academic dishonesty. This means that a student will not submit any written work that has been copied from the Internet or any other form of published media. Additionally a student will not submit any work that has been written by another person without citing that source and will never submit another’s work as his/her own. This would also include unacknowledged paraphrasing. As specified by university policy, such academic dishonesty may result in a penalty grade for the course. For more information on academic dishonesty policy please refer to the Ombudsman webpage: <http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/honestylinks.html>

Grading Criteria and Grading Scale

You will be graded on four elements: a) papers or projects, b) attendance, c) participation, d) presentations as described above.

Attendance	Participation	Journal
20%	30%	50%

NOTE 1: Attendance makes up to 20 % of the whole course grade. However, if a student misses three (3) classes without permission or medical excuse, the student maybe terminated from the course.

NOTE 2: Participation means “**active**” participation. Simply being there is not the same as participating. Points for participation will be awarded only when students are actively engaging in classroom activities, discussion, field exploration, and other learning activities for this course.

Grade Breakdown

Conversion Table between 4.0 Scale and Points

4.0	3.5	3.0	2.5	2.0	1.5	1.0	0.0
point							
90-100	85-89	80-84	75-79	70-74	65-69	60-64	59 & below

Class Schedule and Assignments

Please note that the student prepared for discussions prior to each class. Be sure to bring to class the texts under discussion.

Class 1 – Introduction and trip to Viva City (Students will meet first in the large conference room and then travel to Hikone station where they will then travel to Viva city by local train. Students who are unable to ride a bicycle will go by car to AI Plaza and then ride the train with the other students. In the fall semester this course can be done together with the Kokunairyugaku students.) This class will take approximately three hours

Class 2 – Homestays, Internships, clubs, Goal setting and garbage (This class will focus making smart goals and will expose students to the different opportunities they have while at JCMU.) This class takes place entirely on the JCMU campus. This class will be 2 hours

Class 3 – Japanese study methods and strategies. (This class will focus on what is needed to achieve maximum results from the JCMU Japanese language program) This class will be two hours. This class takes place entirely on the JCMU campus.

Class 4 – Examining culture shock (This class will focus on the stages of culture shock with strategies for overcoming it. Students will discuss any culture shock they've felt and what they intend to do to overcome it.) This class will take place entirely on the JCMU campus and will be one hour long.

Class 5 – Trip to Shigadai or Kendai (Students will meet in the large conference room and head to Shigadai/Kendai to go to the cafeteria and take a campus tour.) This class will be approximately three hours

Class 6 – Strive to THRIVE (This class will have a guest speaker who has lived in Japan for more than 10 years. The speaker will talk about their life in Japan and discuss with students how to not just survive, but to THRIVE in Japan.) This class will be one hour with sometime for free discussion with the speaker after.

Class 7 – Half-way There (This class will review culture shock/accluturation and will ask the students to reflect on their current situation. The class will also revisit their personal goals for their time at JCMU and faculty and staff will offer support in helping students reach any goals that they haven't been able accomplish. This is also a good time for students to re-evaluate their study habits) This class will be one hour. This class takes place entirely on the JCMU campus.

Class 8 – Current understanding vs. Initial expectations (This class will focus on how their initial expectations have changed) This class will be one hour. This class takes place entirely on the JCMU campus.

Class 9 – Looking back and forward (This class will not only look back at the experiences the students have had, but look forward to the remained of the semester so students can plan out how they want to spend the rest of their time and balance that with upcoming presentations and other projects.) This class will be one hour.

Class 10 – What have we learned: About ourselves and Japan (This class will look inward and discuss the ways the study abroad experience has changed the students) This class will be one hour. This class takes place entirely on the JCMU campus.

Class 11 – Potential Careers (This class will focus on careers and working life in Japan) This class will be one hour. This class takes place entirely on the JCMU campus.

Class 12 – CV workshop (This class will focus on how to make a great Resume that can get you a Japan related job) This class will be one hour. This class takes place entirely on the JCMU campus.

Class 13 – Thinking about the future (This class will focus on how to talk about your study abroad experience both in terms of for future careers, but also with friends and family back home.) This class will be one hour. This class takes place entirely on the JCMU campus.

Class 14 – Reverse Culture shock – for those students returning to their home countries. This class will be one hour. This class takes place entirely on the JCMU campus.