

短期留学生受入プログラム学生の仙台滞在記

パーデュー大学からの交換留学生 Hans Livingstone さんより

Tohoku University has taken me by surprise. What started as a minor decision to try my hand at living in Japan, quickly morphed into something far more meaningful to my life. As my time here has passed I have learned about Japan, grown as an individual, and immersed myself in research...

At least, that's what I tell my parents and Purdue's Study Abroad office (my home university). While all of this is true, I tell them this to ensure they know that their money is being well spent. But honestly, Tohoku University is enjoyable and I am having fun. I wouldn't be here if it wasn't. There are many things to do while studying abroad, and enjoying every second is arguably the most important part.

Like most exchange students, my first few weeks were spent with a map in one hand and a pocket translator in the other. I made mistakes, boarded wrong buses, used *sauce* instead of *shoyu*, and generally did things no grown man should be excused for doing. And yet, I wasn't embarrassed (although surely those around me were). I was fine, because studying abroad is about *not* being

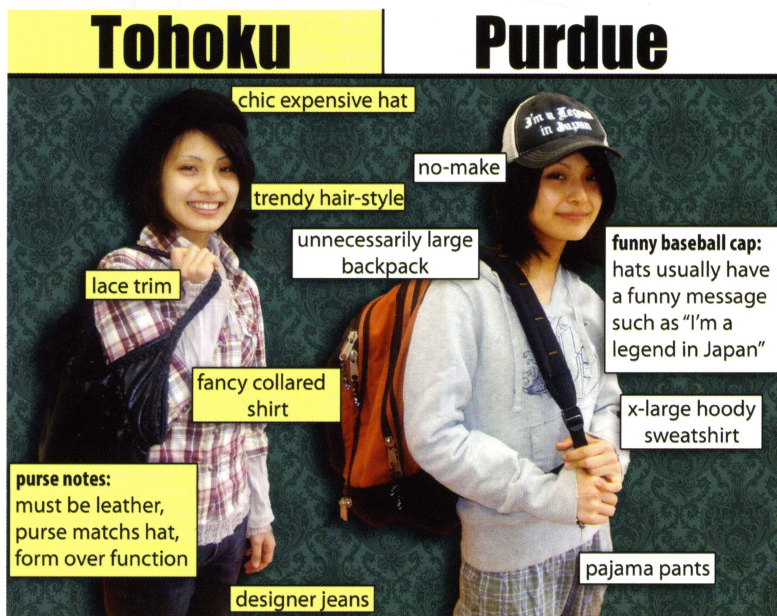


かとうけんきゅうしつ
加藤研究室

afraid to enjoy the differences in our cultures. It's about making mistakes and learning. With that in mind, I will share with you a few of the realizations I have made during my time here at Tohoku.

1) Everyday at Tohoku University is a fashion show.

Makeup, designer clothes, boots, and...Textbooks?!? That's an odd combination. Before coming to Tohoku I was under the impression that Academics and High-fashion were two regimentally separated disciplines. Classes at my home university start at 7:30am, and it's easy to tell -- people wear pajamas to school...regularly. This is normal. They do this even if their classes start in the afternoon. Now it's important to note this distinction, because I've seen girls from Tohoku University perfect hair, equip handbags, and align accessories, just to go for a walk. Perhaps



東北大学では、世界中の有数な大学等と学生交流協定を締結しており、交換留学生向けの短期留学受入プログラムにおいて、現在、世界16カ国・地域等42の大学等から52名の学生を受入れています。

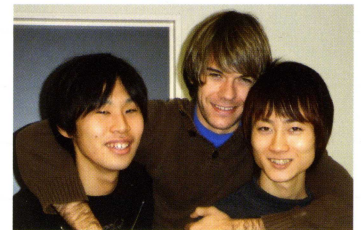
everyone at my school is just a little too stressed to care about their appearance, but Tohoku is a nice change of pace. Likewise, I'd recommend anyone weary of the Tohoku high-fashion circuit to give the Purdue campus a try.

Sidenote: People eat in class too. Once somebody brought an entire pizza to class and after class the professor even ate a slice.

For the differences between Purdue and Tohoku University fashion, refer to the image below.

2) Keep your mouth open.

Despite popular opinion, the most important part of knowing any language is *not* how well one can take a test on it. Unfortunately, it's speaking...And the only way to improve is by speaking. My Japanese is horribly imperfect, and yet I use it every chance I get, it's the only way I can get better. If I make a mistake, it's okay. This should be the golden rule of any foreign exchange student.



ひと
ユニットの人たち

3) The Natto paradox.

Inevitably, if you are a foreigner, a Japanese person will ask you "So, do you like natto?" Now this is an interesting question, because no matter how you answer, you will always get the same response.

For Example, if the answer is "Yes,"

"Wow you like natto? That's amazing, you're a really interesting foreigner!"

However, if the answer is "No,"

"Wow, you don't like natto? Of course you don't, you're a foreigner. Foreigners are interesting!"

This is a good question. Likewise, if you come to America, be prepared for Americans to ask you if you like sushi. You'll get the same response as above.

This year at Tohoku has been the best year of my life. In fact, I've applied to stay a second year. I encourage everyone with an interest to study abroad, and to maybe even try Purdue. And, if you see me on campus, please ask me "Do you like natto?" Thank you.



ともだち
友達のお父さん