

Global Challenge of Gunma: its nature, tradition and contemporary society

Online Summer Programme 2021 at Gunma University, Japan

Application Information

1. Purpose

This online summer programme will be opened to both undergraduate and postgraduate students who are currently enrolled at Gunma University's overseas partner universities. The programme aims to provide students with an opportunity to develop their understandings in Japanese local society under the circumstance of Coronavirus, culture, language and Gunma University by participating in the intensive language and culture courses.

2. Concept and Course

Gunma Prefecture, which has rich beautiful natural environment and specific industries, is located in the center of Japan. However, as well as in other regions in the country, Gunma is confronting many social problems and challenges, such as natural disasters, lifestyle-related diseases, multicultural coexistence and the succession of traditional culture. Therefore, in this programme, participants will be invited to discuss those social issues affecting Japan and think about possible solutions by learning about Gunma's society, people, natural environment, culture and experiencing new projects related to regional revitalization.

English Course: *Study of Japan* in Gunma

This course consists of lectures in *Study of Japan*, project work, group discussion and presentation. Additionally, there will also be an opportunity for the participants to have interaction with Japanese students. Finally, students are required to present their research projects in a final presentation.

A Certificate of Participation will be awarded to all participants at the end of the programme.

3. Method

Lectures and project works will be delivered via Zoom. Skype also will be used when you have special questions about this programme.

4. Requirements

- Undergraduate and postgraduate students from Gunma University's international partner universities and other institutions designated by Gunma University (a certificate to prove Japanese language proficiency is not required).
- Students who are interested in Japanese society and *Study of Japan*.
- Students who understand English well and have sufficient English language proficiency to carry out project work.

- Students who are able to attend all the lectures and project work during the period of June 28 to July 2, 2021.

5. Programme Outline

Period: Monday, 28 June 2021 - Friday, 2 July 2021

Course size: Maximum number of students in each course is 30

Minimum number of students in each course is 5

NO Participation fee

6. Course schedule (Temporary. The fixed course schedule will be announced in May)

| Global challenge in Gunma:its nature, tradition and contemporary society | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|-------------------------------|
| | 10:20-11:50 | 12:40-14:10 | 14:20-15:40 | 16:00-17:20 | Topics |
| 28 June Monday | Welcome message (The Dean of International Center, programme staffs) | Course orientation | Study of Japan (1) Gunma's nature and society: The relationship between Mountain Akagi and people's way of life | Project work 1 | Nature and the way of society |
| 29 June Tuesday | Study of Japan (2) Gunma's hot spring town and its architecture | Study of Japan (3) Traditional Japanese theatres in Gunma and beyond | Project work 2 | Interaction with Gunma students (English Café at Showa Campus, Gunma University) | Nature and tradition |
| 30 June Wednesday | Study of Japan (4)Diabetes Mellitus-Why so many in Gunma? | Study of Japan (5) Silkworm: past history and future plans in Gunma and Japan | Project work 3 | Interaction with Gunma students (Global Café) | Contemporary society |
| 1 July Thursday | Study of Japan (6) Buddhist Art in Japan: An Aesthetic, Universal and Practical Interpretation of the Ten Ox-Herding Pictures | break | Project work 4: Prepare for the final presentation | | Tradition and culture |
| 2 July Friday | Conclude this programme | Final Presentation (All are welcome) and online farewell party | | | |

- 1) For the project work, students are required to discuss the issues brought up in the lectures and summarize the knowledge you have gained about the characteristic of Gunma's regional society through group discussion.
- 2) For the final presentation, students are required to conclude this one-week-programme and present the new way of observing and analyzing the global challenge in Gunma. The presentation shall be the group presentation on the basis of your group's discussion.

Lecture Summaries: *Study of Japan*

| Title and Instructor | Summary |
|--|---|
| <p>Gunma's nature and society: The relationship between Mountain Akagi and people's way of life</p> <p>Yunlian Chen Gunma University, International Center</p> | <p>Mountain Akagi is located in the center of Gunma prefecture, which could be viewed from different angles in the city of Maebashi. Today, as an iconic urban scenery and a popular place for leisure, Mountain Akagi is famous. However, back to the few decades ago, the faith of Akagi had shaped Gunma people's daily life and their seasonal activities during the year. Though, the faith of Akagi is gradually forgotten among young generations, its memories are still remaining in the heart and daily habits of the people in Gunma. This lecture will explore the relationship between the natural environment and people's way of life in the contemporary society of Gunma through the case study of Mountain Akagi.</p> |
| <p>The hot spring towns and their architectures in Gunma Prefecture</p> <p>Yunlian Chen Gunma University, International Center</p> | <p>Japanese hot springs have been famous worldwide for its chemical ingredients and medical effects. However, from the ancient times, great attentions have been paid in designing town, spa inn and various types of different bath places in hot spring cities, which reflect an important aspect in the relationship between "Water environment and Humanities". Therefore, this lecture is going to clarify and discuss Gunma Prefecture's unique hot spring culture through the perspective of the hot spring city and its architecture.</p> |
| <p>Traditional Japanese Theatres in Gunma and Beyond</p> <p>Michiko Suemastu Gunma University, Faculty of Informatics (Faculty of Social and Information Studies)</p> | <p>In the Edo period (1603-1868), traditional theatres such as <i>bunraku</i> and <i>kabuki</i> constituted an important part of popular culture in Gunma. This lecture will focus on <i>kabuki</i>, reviewing its development from popular village entertainment to lavish star-studded spectacle in the city of Edo, early modern capital of Japan. We will also see how <i>kabuki</i> today is embracing cutting-edge technology to stage its updated versions, 'Super Kabuki' and 'Cho Kabuki'.</p> |
| <p>Diabetes Mellitus-Why so many cases in Gunma?</p> <p>Noriyuki Koibuchi Gunma University, Faculty of Medicine</p> | <p>Diabetes mellitus is one of the most common lifestyle-related diseases in the world. Although Gunma has very rich nature and healthy environment, the population of diabetes patients is much higher than that in other regions. We usually consider that clean air, water and nature make people healthy. However, the result is opposite in Gunma. In my talk, I briefly discuss the mechanisms causing diabetes and disclose the secret why we have so many diabetes patients in Gunma.</p> |
| <p>Silkworm: past history and future plans in Gunma and Japan</p> <p>Shigeki Takeda Gunma University, School of Science and Technology</p> | <p>The silkworm is one of the insects and makes cocoons at the pupal stage. Silk is made from silkworm cocoons. Japan was the world's largest silk producer in the early 1900s. In the 21st century, several types of silk with new features and various useful proteins are produced in silkworms using genetic engineering techniques. This lecture will introduce the characteristics of silkworms, the history of silk production in Gunma, and the application of transgenic technology to silkworms.</p> |
| <p>Buddhist Art in Japan: An Aesthetic, Universal and Practical Interpretation of the Ten Ox-Herding Pictures</p> <p>Sylvain Bergeron Gunma University, Education Center</p> | <p>Based on the *Ten Ox-Herding Pictures*, this talk will present a multidimensional interpretation of this important example of Zen Buddhist art. In addition to exposing students to the religio-aesthetic qualities of this work, students will be invited to actively reflect on the lessons contained within each of the ten pictures in order to grasp the universal (not limited to any one religion or set of beliefs), practical and timeless message that this series of enigmatic images has been teaching us over the centuries.</p> |

7. Application process

- Application: Please apply via your own university officers, who are responsible for international exchange. They will apply on your behalf via email.
- Application deadline: 24 May 2021 (Monday).
- If the number of participants reaches to 30 before 24 May 2021, the application for this online summer programme will be closed following the outcome of applications.
- Announcement of selection results: Gunma University will send the results to your universities by 31 May 2021(Monday).

8. About Gunma University

Gunma University is located about 100 km north-west of Tokyo and consists of Faculty of Cooperative Education, Faculty of Informatics (Faculty of Social and Information Studies), Faculty of Medicine, School of Science and Technology. Currently, Gunma university have about 6,500 students, of which approximately 250 are international students. There are 30 exchange students from our overseas partner universities have so far studied for half a year or one year in the academic year 2019.

9. For inquires

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