

Faculty of Economics  
Kindai University

Study Abroad Program  
Student Reports



2023 Calgary Canada

## **PREFACE**

This publication marks the eleventh year of the study abroad program established between the Faculty of Economics at Kindai University and the University of Calgary. In April 2023, twenty students, whose names are listed below, participated in this 4-month study abroad program in Canada until the end of July.

During their stay in Calgary, the students were encouraged to study hard and be observant of the behavior, manners, and customs of their new classmates, their host families, and the people living in the area. Judging from the students' comments, they benefited tremendously from their time in Canada. Not only did they have many opportunities to communicate in English, but they also learned what it is like to live in a multicultural society. All the students made new friends with students from many various countries and became better informed on the ways people in other cultures live their daily lives. They were able to view Japanese society from the outside, allowing them to reflect on their own culture, history, and behavior as Japanese citizens, but more importantly, take those first real steps in becoming world citizens. This publication is a compilation of the students' reflection papers. It is our hope that these essays will provide each reader with a close-up view of what the students experienced and learned during their time living in Canada.

Through the vision of Professor Yoshiharu Imanishi, the former Dean of the Faculty of Economics, this program was established and remains successful thanks to the support of many people. A big thank you to Professor Osamu Inoue and Professor Kosuke Sugai for planning and organizing the curriculum; the staff in the Economics Student Support Center, and the staff and faculty at the University of Calgary. Last, but certainly not least, we appreciate the warm and loving care from the homestay families who opened their homes and their hearts to our students. On behalf of the English Department, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all parties involved in the realization of this wonderful achievement.

Peter Ferguson, Editor

## **Names of the Participants (in the order appearing in the text)**

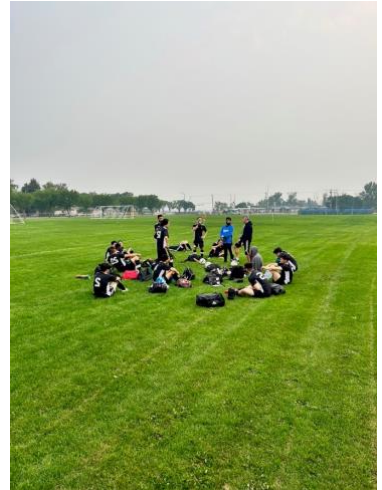
- |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| (1) Kensaku Asano    | (11) Raita Morikawa  |
| (2) Hojun Choi       | (12) Kotaro Nagata   |
| (3) Saya Fujimura    | (13) Yuki Nakai      |
| (4) Ren Fujiwara     | (14) Seina Ninomiya  |
| (5) Rikuto Hirabaru  | (15) Yugo Okada      |
| (6) Osuke Katayama   | (16) Kiyoe Shimizu   |
| (7) Nathaly Kawamura | (17) Harunori Tabata |
| (8) Mari Kunimoto    | (18) Kaho Tamura     |
| (9) Yoichi Masumoto  | (19) Kokona Tanaka   |
| (10) Nonoka Mizutani | (20) Ann Yabuta      |



# My life in Calgary

Kensuke Asano

I would like to write about two things that I did outside of studying at university in Calgary. I wanted to make foreign friends, so I went to a church I had heard about from a friend. I made many friends there and one of them invited me to join a local soccer team! I joined the team around May and played every week there. The matches were always very tough. It was more difficult than anything to communicate with my teammates in English during the games, but as the games went on, I got better and better at talking to my teammates. There were people from many different countries on that team, so I was able to build good relationships with friends from many different countries.



I hung out a lot with friends I met on the soccer team and friends I made in university. They drove us to faraway places. I often went with them to go shopping and to casinos. They told me about a lot of cool stores. I went shopping with them every weekend and bought a lot of clothes. On my birthday they gave me a gift. I was very surprised because I had not expected this. They made my life in Calgary so much better. If I had not met them in Calgary, my life in Calgary would have been very boring. All my experiences in Calgary are the best memories I have! I hope to see them again someday, be it in Canada, Japan or elsewhere!



# My Valuable Experiences

Hojun Choi

I have had a lot of experiences that I've never experienced for four months. At first I couldn't understand South American people because they were very different from Asian people. They were raising their hands to ask questions in class while most of the Asian students weren't asking questions to the teachers because they were really shy and afraid of asking. In addition, we've never received an active education when we were children. However, by taking classes in Canada for four months we weren't afraid of asking questions anymore.

I could learn about various cultures that I've never seen before. There were a variety of races from many countries at the University of Calgary. I had much time to communicate and learn about their culture and languages. For instance, I learned about Spanish from South American students. I thought, they used the same Spanish, but I could learn that Spanish was not all the same and that it differed by regions. Moreover, I taught them about Korean culture and some Korean words.

Canada has many landscapes and a lot of beautiful nature. Canada is the second biggest country in the world and there are around forty million people. I could see beautiful landscape that I've never seen in Japan or Korea, and could feel something that I couldn't explain. I went to several famous places in Calgary where I could take many great pictures. It was absolutely different from Japanese environment.

Canadian people were really kind and friendly. Canadian people love small talk with other people. Some people who I had never known, asked me how I was doing and where was I from. I think that Asian people will be surprised if they visit Canada because it is not a common situation in Japan. Also, when I went drinking with my friends, Canadian people spoke to us and they even paid our bill. I didn't only learn English but also I could learn about a lot of experience and life. I learned more important things than improving English. I can't forget it that I lived in Canada. I strongly believe that studying abroad in Canada is the one of the most precious experiences in my life. My thinking was changed by several people who came from many foreign countries. For example, I could become to respect and to recognize various people who had various religions, thinking and beliefs.





# Life in Calgary

Yugo Okada

I would like to introduce about my life in Calgary. I always drank something, like coffee, juice, or tea. When I want to drink something, I always went to Tim Hortons, which is the most famous coffee shop in Canada. Normally, prices in Canada are very high compared to Japan, but Tim Horton's coffee and doughnuts are very inexpensive. For example, you can buy coffee for 1.5 dollars, and doughnuts for 2 dollars. Also, Tim Hortons has the largest number of coffee shops in Canada. Thanks to this, you can go to Tim Hortons no matter where you are. Even if it is at a World Heritage Site or an airport. My most favorite coffee in Tim Hortons is *double double*. *Double double* is Canadian slang means coffee with double milk and double sugar. But it's just the perfect taste for me, not too sweet, not too much. And my most favorite doughnuts is 'Tim Bits'. You can choose the number of Tim bits and the flavors. You can enjoy a lot of flavors cheaply.



Two times a week I usually played soccer with my friends from Mexico and Ukraine, who can speak English. It was so hard and aggressive, but so exciting and fun. And you can learn English though playing soccer. I think it is the best way to master English. If you want to play soccer with foreigners, you need to ask David, who is the instructor in EDC. And I recommend you bring soccer wear and soccer shoes!



# Wonderful Memories with my Host Family

Saya Fujimura

Thanks to my host family, what I have learned is that in Canada is not only about English and Canadian culture. Canada is a very diverse country with many people of different nationalities. In fact, my host family was Filipino.

The time I spent with my host family was very difficult, but I learned a lot. In the first few weeks, I was full of anxiety. I struggled with the language barrier and cultural differences. They had Filipino accents, and since I had never heard a Filipino accent before it was difficult for me to even understand them. I had to listen to them over and over again, and even then there were times when I could not understand them. However, they used various ways to communicate with me, and gradually I was able to understand them. Also, my host mother was a teacher and sometimes taught me English. My host father said he was not good at English, but he helped me with my assignments and gave me advice.

As for cultural differences, I felt that Filipinos interacted with each other more intimately than Japanese. My host family invited friends over for dinner every weekend, and my host mother had video calls with her family in the Philippines every morning and evening. They were very close to me and kept in touch with me when I was out of town or traveling. The biggest cultural difference I experienced was on my birthday. I did not tell my host family my birthday. My profile was given to them in advance and I felt that telling them my birthday myself would be like asking for a gift. They saw my Instagram on the day and asked why I didn't tell them. They said that in the Philippines it is common for the birthday person to throw a party and invite their friends to celebrate with them. Despite the short notice they prepared a feast and lots of gifts. In fact, when my host mother's birthday was coming up, she told me it was her birthday and we all celebrated together with her friends.

There were many times when I struggled with other cultural differences and lifestyle

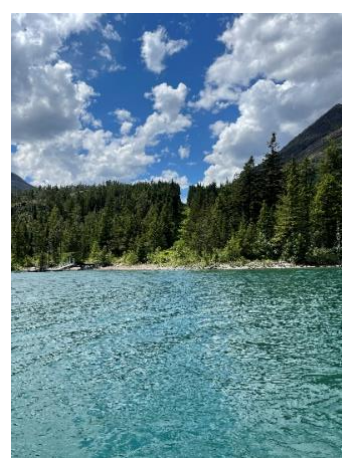


differences, but they took care to make my stay easy and I gradually got used to it. They also took me to some night markets and festivals to give me a variety of experiences. On holidays, I made Filipino food and cakes with my host mother. Thanks to them, I was able to make many fun memories in Canada. They are coming to Japan next year for a trip, so I'm looking forward to meeting them again!

# Activities in Calgary

Ren Fujiwara

I had many good experiences in this program. I studied hard, made new friends and hung out with them. And more, there were too many things that happened that I can't write about everything here. So, I would like to focus on activities and introduce the most enjoyable activities. I joined many activities in this program. Actually, there were some boring events. However, most of the activities were fun and it was very fulfilling and makes us get to know each other.



One of the most enjoyable activities was the Banff Overnight trip. Banff is small touristy town which has many good spots. I went shopping there and had lunch as well as dinner. In addition, I went snowboarding with an instructor. Of course, they speak English. It helped me to improve my English skills. I've never snowboarded in my life so it was very difficult, but it was so much fun.

The second activity was the Banff one-day trip. This activity was the same place that I wrote above, but this program was totally different from the last one. We explored nature and visited Lake Louise. This place is famous for the vivid turquoise waters to the soaring peaks encircling the lake. As you can see in the picture, it was beautiful and spectacular.

The last activity was the Waterton overnight trip. This place is also a very small town and it has a very long history. We stayed in an historic hotel and had a good time with my friends. And more, I went to southernmost place in Canada on a cruise ship and saw the border line between Canada and US.

These things what I introduced is only one part of my experiences. I learned many things from these activities and appreciate my friends and instructors who organized these events. If I have an opportunity, I would like to visit Canada again.



# My Dearest Memory

Rikuto Hirabaru

People reading this are probably students who are interested in studying abroad or want to know how our study abroad program is going. So I would like to write about what I think was great about our study abroad experience.

First of all, the barrier against speaking English was broken. I think that many Japanese people do not speak English. However, the English ability that everyone has is actually applicable overseas. Basically, we have been communicating only with grammar since junior high school English class. What many Japanese students lack is that they do not know the fact that they can communicate in English. Since junior high school they have too little experiences and familiarity with actually speaking English, and that they do not have enough listening ability. When I understood this fact, the barrier was broken in my mind and I found myself able to speak English with anyone.

There were many different nationalities in the study abroad class at the University of Calgary. They all had their own native accents, making it difficult to understand even the same English. In other words, it is not strange to have a strong Japanese accent and be able to communicate. Also, along with that, you can become an open-minded person who can talk to anyone. The man in the first photo is Mexican. I am not an open-minded person by nature, but if people saw this picture, they would think I have an open-minded personality. Kindai University has a facility called E-cube. There, Japanese is strictly prohibited and only English is spoken. I have talked with people who have studied in other countries there, and they also seem to have become more open-minded than before. They too have broken down the barriers. I may have to study abroad again to see their personalities.



The second picture is my host family and roommates. This is my host mother, host father, his son, and his girlfriend. We would get together mostly on holidays and it was basically just the four of us with my parents and my roommate. I think one of the reasons I was able to use English without worrying about it is that I talked with them every day while watching TV and other programs.



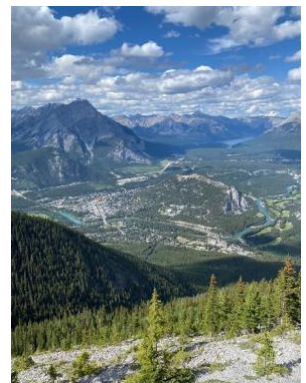
Now that this barrier has been broken, I feel that I can speak any other language without worrying about my skills. For example, whether I am in the middle of learning Chinese or Spanish, I would not be afraid to speak it now. I also made a lot of other great memories during this study abroad program. All of them are my dearest memories.

## Activities in Canada

Osuke Katayama

I had a great time in Calgary. I had a lot of precious experiences that I can't do in Japan. I'm going to write about school activities. I joined a lot of school activities. The first activity I want to introduce to you is the Banff trip. I went to Banff three times. Banff is a beautiful national park. The first time I went skiing. It was May but the mountains were covered with snow. I couldn't imagine that I could ski in May. In Calgary, May is the end of winter so it is still cold. The quality of snow was super good. It was totally different from Japan which is why it was easy to ski. I was surprised when I saw people wearing T-shirts at a ski resort. The instructor told me that they think over 5 degrees Celsius is summer because it is over than -30 degrees Celsius in the winter in Calgary. I have never experienced such cold temperatures. Can you imagine that? I can't and I don't want to.

The second time, I went to Moraine Lake. It was the most beautiful lake I have ever visited in my life. The color was flashing emerald green. I couldn't describe my feeling when I saw the lake for the first time. I still remember the color and see the picture. That makes me feel so relax. The third time I went to Banff, I rode on a gondola and I went to the top of the mountain. The view was amazing. I saw the town of Banff from there. I was impressed with the view. I really recommend you to visit there. Actually I met some visitors from Japan. That was interesting.



The next activity is the Waterton trip. This was an overnight trip and I enjoyed a lot of things. I saw the border between Canada and USA. Japan is an island so this was the first time to see an artificial border. That changed my stereotype because I can see the border clearly. I can now say the USA is a country I have been to because I went over the border. I ate bison burger in Waterton. It was delicious. I think I can't distinguish bison from beef. I feel it is very similar to beef.

## University of Calgary Activities

Nathaly Kawamura

Before I went to Canada, I was nervous to spend more than three months in a foreign country as it was my first time being away from home for such a long time. But I had such a good time there. One of the things that I really loved about the program was university life there. Especially, the activities since it helped me to meet new people and get to know each other. I would like to introduce some of my favorite activities.

First, the Banff trip. I went there three times, an overnight trip, a day trip, and another day trip by myself with some friends. The first time was an overnight trip in the first week of May. On the first day, we went skiing and snowboarding. Although I didn't like the height, the view from the gondola was awesome. On the second day, we went for a hike to Johnston Canyon. The best part of the hike for me was to enter the small cave that gets very close to Johnston Canyon Falls and get soaked. After that we went to Banff Townsite. I like the atmosphere of the town. There were many souvenir shops and the shop with the colorful candies was the cutest for me. In the second week of June, we went to Banff again for a day trip but this time we went to Lake Louise and Moraine Lake. The Moraine Lake's color was much more beautiful but when I told my host mother, she told me that after July the color of Lake Louise turns to emerald green so I decided to go there again with some friends, and it was true. It was totally worth going for the third time. We also went canoeing there and it was an unforgettable experience.

Second was the Stampede Grandstand Show. My favorite ones were the Chuckwagon races and the relay races because it was my first time watching a horse race. The show ends with performances and fireworks. One thing that I was very surprised of was that a lot of people dressed like cowboys for the Calgary Stampede season that lasts ten days. It was amazing to be there and experience the Calgary Stampede. I deeply regret that I didn't bring back to Japan the cowboy hat I bought for this season.

I only wrote about a few activities that we had, but I think that all the activities are

worth going on. So I'm glad that I could participate in almost all the activities that the program had because it was the best opportunity to get to know more people other than classmates and thanks to that I could make new friends and become closer. Throughout the entire study abroad program I feel that I not only improved my English skills, but also my values.



## A Precious Experience of My Life

Mari Kunimoto

Although it is really hard for me to choose only one topic to write about my study abroad in Canada, I would like to share my precious experiences with my warm-hearted host family and cherished friends. During my stay in Calgary, I spent time with a Filipino host family that consists of 3 members: host mother, father, and a 13-year-old brother. Also, I had a 17-year-old roommate who is from Italy, and she was supposed to stay about 10 months in Calgary. It didn't take much time for me to get along with my host mom and roommate because they were pretty sociable and friendly. On the other hand, my host father and brother were a little bit shy to communicate with me at first. Even though we didn't have anything to chat with each other at that time, I tried to stay in the living room and watched NBA and other TV





shows together every day. I clearly remember the day my host father suddenly opened up. Since that day we started talking about our hobbies, favorite basketball teams, and he even told me a lot of cooking tips. He always made me laugh by telling funny jokes.



About my Italian roommate, I had a great relationship with her. I usually saw her on a bus and went back home together and sometimes we hung out in a shopping mall, park, and downtown after school. So that is the reason why I went to Toronto with her in the middle of May. Although we could enjoy the 4-day trip in Toronto, there were countless troubles both before and after getting there, such as wildfires, a pilots' strike, and financial issues. At that time, I really appreciated my host mother's kindness because she was always there and supported me when I was confused to solve these problems. The same can be said not only about my favorite teachers but also about my best friends, who are from Ukraine, Yemen and Mongolia. Thanks to them, I felt hugely cheered up and overcame everything. I'm so grateful that I could have such positive, thoughtful and sweet friends in the country. Also I'm really happy that I could go on a trip to Vancouver and Victoria with my Ukrainian friend in the beginning of July. It became one of my best memories in Canada. Before going back to Japan, a lot of my friends invited me to their home party and we spent a wonderful time together. Needless to say, I have kept in touch with them after coming back home to Japan almost every day.

I also really wanted to explain about my fantastic experience of each outdoor activity and my high-level classes, but unfortunately I don't have enough space to write everything down here. I decided to stay in Canada not only to improve my English, but also to broaden my mind, and in fact, this experience was much more worthwhile than I expected. All the moments in Canada were fascinating! To think back about my precious host family and friends in Calgary, absolutely that is enough reason for me to go back to the country again.





## Beautiful Memories

Yoichi Masumoto

The time spent with lots of friends in Calgary taught me many things. Before I went there, I was anxious and very worried about if I can communicate with foreign people. Because it was my first time to live surrounded by English and I had never used English in my daily life. However, those fears disappeared as soon as I started my study abroad program. I learned a lot while communicating with my host family and other students from all over the world.

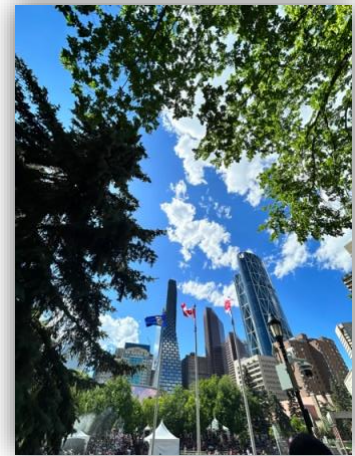




Through discussions with my classmates about each other's culture and language, I realized the beauty of Japan, as well as the beauty of other countries. Many students were interested in Japan, so I taught them Japanese and recommended restaurants. Also, I was able to understand their background and what they value. A Mexican friend told me that she had practiced law in Mexico, but had moved to Canada and was studying to become a licensed lawyer. Also, my Korean friend is studying AI at university and wants to work as an engineer in Canada someday. I have fond memories of studying in the same space with all of them having different goals.

Canada's nature is so beautiful that words can't describe how I felt. Seeing the Northern Lights in Banff on an activity trip was one of the best memories. Banff is the most beautiful place I have ever visited, surrounded by mountains that you can never experience in Japan.

Finally, time flies so fast. I was so happy to experience many things that I could only do in Canada. I hope to return one day to see the friends I met there and the nature of Calgary!



## My Host Family and Friends

Nonoka Mizuani

I would like to write about my host family and friends. It was my first time overseas and to do a homestay. Therefore, I was so nervous to meet my host family. However, they were very kind and I could open up to them quickly. There are six people in my host family: my host father, my host mother, their son, their daughter, my host grandfather, and my host grandmother. They are Filipino and Christian. I'm grateful to my host family because they cooked many delicious foods and took me to church.

First, my host father and my host grandfather are good at cooking. As I wrote before, they are Filipino, therefore I could try a lot of Filipino dishes. My favorite Filipino dish is



*sinigang*. It is soup and a little sour. It contains tomatoes, onions, radishes, okra, and pork. One day, my host father asked me what my favorite food was. I answered that I like shrimp. That night, he cooked shrimp *sinigang* for me. It was very delicious. They are also good at fish dishes. I had many kinds of them. My host grandfather taught me how to cook them. Before I went to Calgary, I thought I couldn't have rice and I had to eat oily foods. However, I really enjoyed rice and healthy Filipino foods. I miss their food. That is why, I would like to have it again.



Second, every Sunday, they took me to church. It was my first time participating in Christian activities. That church was for Filipinos. I could make a lot of Filipino friends. My best friend in Calgary is Jasmine. She is eighteen years old and called Jaja. She invited me to join her Life Group. Every Thursday, we studied the Bible in the Life Group. We prayed, sang, and danced together. She knows that in Japan, there is no religion there but really Buddhism, and so I have a lot of questions about the Christian religion. Every time, she kindly answered my questions. Thanks to her, I could experience Christian culture. We still keep in touch. I was glad to have met my host family and friends.





In conclusion, I really think I'm so fortunate to have met my host family and friends. I was able to improve my English skills by talking and texting with them. Also, I could learn about their culture. I will never forget this experience. I would like to go to Calgary again and see them.

## Diversity

Raita Moriwaki

Have you ever thought of diversity? When you live in Japan, we have few opportunities to think about it. However, if you are in Calgary, you have many chances to think about diversity.

First, in my classes I met people who came from different countries, for example, Thailand, Ukraine, Korea, China, Peru, Russia and Mexico. I was able to experience other ways of thinking and different cultures. One of the interesting points of view was that internship is not beneficial. Many Japanese students think internship is important to get a good job, but people from another countries thought that it is not benefitable because you can't get money when you join an internship.



Second, your hobbies play an important role. In my case, I played soccer with students from Spain and went to a sports bar with them. Another example is that I played ultimate frisbee with students from Asian countries and after playing the games, I sometimes went to eat with my teammates. If you have a hobby, you can talk about it with your classmates. If your hobby is watching movies, you can go to watch movies after school. It will be good memories.

Third, it is interesting to talk with your homestay family. My host family came from Taiwan, so my dinner was often Chinese food, but my friend's mostly ate British food. I chatted with my friends about dinner every day. That was so much fun. You may struggle with food in Canada, but it will be good memory, so I want you to try a lot of things. In conclusion, in Canada, there are a lot of people from different countries and you can meet them so easily in classes. And your experiences plays essential role

because of them, you can feel and join in the diversity of Calgary. Thus, I think going to Canada will definitely give you great experiences on diversity.

## Life in Calgary

Kotaro Nagata

First, I want to show you this nice scenery. This is Niagara Falls. I visited here with my friends when I traveled to Toronto. In addition, I watched a major league baseball game at the stadium for the first time!



This is my roommate, Jen Rey! He is from Dubai and speaks English very well. Surprisingly, he studies architecture! He is so smart! He is a very nice guy, so he always supported me and made me happy! I commuted to the University of Calgary every day. I studied mainly English surrounded by people from various countries. These times were so brilliant for me! I polished my English skills hard every day with them!



# My Host Family

Yuki Nakai

My study abroad experience was the first time I went abroad. Thus, everything I experienced was a new thing for me. And I was able to build a good relationship with my host family. I would like to write about unforgettable experiences with them.

Before I left Japan, I was filled with anxiety and worry. But I was relieved when I arrived at Calgary airport and my host mother welcomed me with a hug. That first day in Canada was one of the most unforgettable experiences. Because my host mother took me to a lacrosse game even though I was tired after a long flight. But it was good since I always don't go anywhere when I feel tired. So I felt fulfilled. I met her children for the first time there. They also welcomed me with a hug. I felt so happy since all of my host families were very kind.

Another day, I played with my host brother and sister. He is good at playing soccer and attends his soccer lesson, so we played soccer. I am not good at playing it, but he said to me, "Yuki, good job!" and he advised me. One thing I noticed in my life in Canada is that they praise me even if I fail or am not good at something. My host sister and I did gymnastics and played with dolls together. During the doll play, when I couldn't understand her English, she would give me the appropriate line for the scene. When I imitated her and said the lines, she also always praised me like "Good!" So, I could do things in front of them without being shy even if I couldn't do it well. Eventhough I have low self-esteem, I was happy to feel that they accepted everything about me.

Occasionally, my host family and I ate dinner together. Whenever we ate dinner, we had a lot of conversations and I learned a bunch of things. For example, we talked about Japanese culture, elementary school in Canada, some Japanese words, weather, French, cursive writing, and so on! I would like to pick up a few of these. In terms of Japanese culture, I taught them the meaning of *itadakimasu* and *gochisousama*. Then, my host mother liked the Japanese spirit of appreciating plants and animals and tried to say the greeting. I was glad that I could let them know about Japanese culture and that they liked it. As for the Canadian elementary school, their timetable and rules surprised me. Because their one class period is as long as a Japanese university! And I learned that they are allowed to wear nail polish to school. I told them that



we cannot do it in Japanese elementary schools and then, they said “That’s strange.” As can be seen, I learned so many things about Canadian culture through conversations with them.

Finally, I would like to share an episode of my best host mother. About a month after I arrived in Canada, I was very depressed and cried alone. The reason was that I felt my English skills were not as good as my friends. The next day, I took the courage and confessed to her about it. And then, she said to me “Everyone learns at a different pace. So it's okay. We, the family, will try our best to help you improve your English.” and she hugged me. She always treated me as a real family member, not as an international student. She always gave me love. I should feel lucky that I spent time with such a wonderful host family. They made my study abroad experience enjoyable.

## Homestay

Seina Ninomiya

My host mother was the most wonderful person I've ever met. I could spend a lot of time with her because we had a good relationship. When I arrived at Calgary airport for the first time, I couldn't find her while everyone else was meeting their host family. So I was very anxious and nervous, but she just hadn't arrived yet. She is working as a nurse and she is always busy. I could finally meet her so I was relieved. After we reached her house, we started to eat dinner. I knew that she is from Pakistan and speaks Urdu and English. She came to Canada when she was 20 years old and lived here for almost 40 years. Therefore, she studied English harder and now she speaks it frequently.

At first, I didn't talk much with her and I know that I must study English harder because I really wanted to communicate with her in English. She knew that I am shy so she talked to me every day, even in the morning. She understood that to develop my English skills, I needed to speak it a lot. As the days went by, I could talk English more and more. From that time on, I often went for walks with her after school. During this time, we talked about a lot of things. For example, friends, girl talk, her family and so on. When I was struggling with my relationship with my boyfriend, I talked about it to her using my poor English. She listened to that and came up with a solution. She said that a girl doesn't have to make her boyfriend grow up and he must grow up as an adult himself. I was surprised by her opinion and I feel it too. I learned not only English, but also a lot of things from her. It was really fun and she helped me.

We sometimes went to a nail salon together and changed the color. We had the same hobbies and had so much fun. One day, she took me to a barbecue at a park. It was Canada Day. We got up at 6 o'clock and got ready for it. She drove me there. We stood in line for over an



hour and half to get food. I got tired just standing in line and she was also exhausted. But we were satisfied with the free food. Surprisingly, I ate two burgers and fried potatoes. She did as well. We finished our meal, and then we regained our energy. When I was sitting on the lawn, she spoke to me. She told me that I speak English much better than when I first came to Canada. I was really glad because she is the person who is closest to me. I think that I wouldn't be where I am today without her. Thus, she is the person I admire the most and she is like a mother living in Canada to me. My best memory in Canada is meeting her. I can't thank her enough.



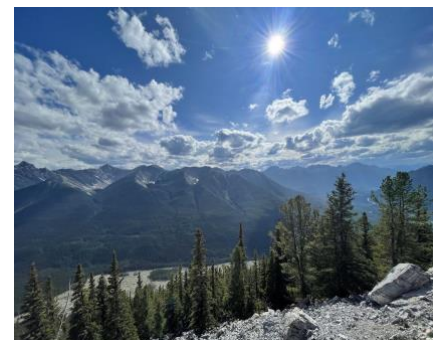
## My life in Calgary with precious friends

Kiyoe Shimizu

This is an essay about my wonderful experience through a study abroad program at the University of Calgary in Canada. I was ideally motivated because studying abroad was one of my big dreams in my life. This dream not only gives us the opportunity to learn English, but a new worldview, new friendships, and a new appreciation for other cultures and people. I could especially meet a lot of friends from all over the world, such as Korea, China, Mexico and Mongolia. Studying English abroad allows us to build connections between other countries while also learning and practicing English. Also, Canada is easily one of the most multicultural countries in the world so people respect other cultures there. I always had lunch with international students so we taught each other our mother tongue at lunch time. Sometimes we went to hang out and activities from this program so I could learn a lot of culture through my Calgary life. It was a wonderful relationship for me and every day was

full of fun.

One of my memorable events is Calgary Stampede. It is a about 10-day celebration of Old West culture. In this period, everyone dressed up like a cowboy or cowgirl. Moreover, there was a big carnival for Stampede in downtown Calgary. I went there twice with my classmates and we had a blast. In this activity, we could see a big show about Stampede and they had fireworks too. I think this is a special event that we can find only here. Of course, we could know each other through our class, but I tried to make new friendships in another community. For example, there was a meet-up club with Japanese and people from another country called JCC. Many Japanese students attend it and interact with members of this club. In my case, I tried to talk to someone on campus and made a few friends. It was very nervous for me to talk to new people but I could remove my hesitation. One of my Canadian friends invited us to a Japanese class as an undergraduate. The teacher was Japanese so we received a warm welcome from her and the class of students. They had traditional Japanese children's games in Japanese so it was very interesting for us too. I will never forget my time and people who met through this program in Canada and am waiting for the opportunity to go back.



# Life in Calgary

Harunori Tabata

This study abroad program was the first time I went outside of Japan. I didn't know many things about Canada and life in other countries. However, we'd taken a Language & Culture class before we started a semester program. In that class, I learned a lot of information about Canada and Calgary. They taught me the history, geography, and culture of Canada. It helped me to get used to life there in a bunch of situations including out of the class.

The classes start at 9 a.m. and ends at 3 or 4 p.m. I'm no longer a high or junior high school student, so this lifestyle was hard for me. But the daytime in Calgary is so long, so I could do many things after the classes. I watched movies in movie theatres, went to shopping malls, and worked out in a gym located in the university every day with some friends. That's why I got tired and I could sleep deeply every single day. In my opinion, that's why people in Calgary can have free time, unlike people in Japan, to reduce stress after they work. It's so lucky for them.



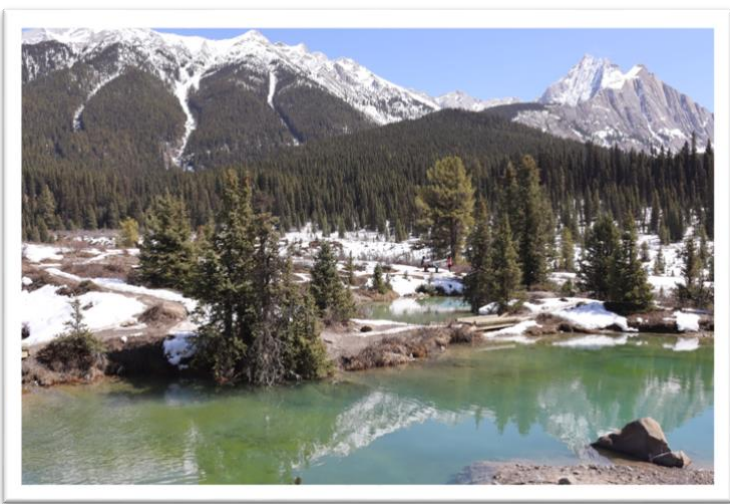
Sky at 10 p.m.! →

After school, one of my hobbies was watching movies. I planned to watch many movies in Calgary, and I had mentioned that to my host family before I went there. My host mother told me that there is a big movie theatre near her house. When I saw it with my own eyes, I was so surprised because it was so big! Many times larger than I expected. It's not only that theatres, but also other commercial buildings, such as supermarkets and shopping malls,



are also big. They have big parking lots and most of the buildings have only one floor or two. Relatively, cars in Canada are big and the roads are also big. I think people in Calgary must have their own cars because the land is too large and inconvenient for people without cars. I took approximately 90





minutes to get to the university by bus, which picked people up at many bus stops. But if I had enough money to use taxis, or rent a car, it only took 20 minutes. Such a waste of time!

Lastly, I strongly want to say that the prices for everything in Canada are fully different from Japan, especially food and beverages. Everything is too expensive for me. If you want to eat a burger combo for

lunch, it can be 20 dollars (= about 2,000 yen) or more. I acknowledged we have to raise the basic salary in Japan, otherwise, we can't stay with other developed countries anymore. Overall, this great experience was very good for me to remark that the world is huge, and my range of life is so small.

## School life in Calgary

Kaho Tamura

I had many memorable experiences in Calgary. Especially, my school life was the most enjoyable. We had three 90-120 minutes classes Monday through Thursday. They end before noon only on Friday. Although I thought my schedule was tight at first, the day was over before I knew it. I felt that I want to attend to the school more after finishing a semester. Therefore, I'd like to recommend studying abroad. The primary reason is that the classes were interactive. For example, my teachers proceeded with my classes in group discussions. We didn't only listen to our teachers and write on a blackboard, but we also had to talk with other students in English. However, it was a little hard to summarize all student's opinions due to having each different cultures as well as backgrounds. My classmates are from various countries: Korea, Colombia, Mexico and Ukraine. At the same time, I thought that my abilities wouldn't improved more if I gave up. We tried to understand each other by communicating. As a result, I felt a sense of





accomplishment because I actively participated with them.

The second reason is that I changed myself by going to school. For instance, I like to go outside more than before. According to my pedometer on the phone, the averages number of steps increased about 5000 since I went to Calgary. I used to take a walk after school and weekends. I also woke up early because it took about an hour to go to school. Thus, I came to live a well-regulated life. Moreover, I'm no longer afraid to make a mistake. I lost my confidence to speak English before. I especially worried about whether my English was correct. However,



I had to talk with new foreign students every day as I mentioned above. My teachers and friends helped me whenever I couldn't understand. As a result, I've felt more confident by getting used to it. For these reasons, I thought it was a good opportunity to face myself.

To conclude, I had wonderful school life in Calgary because it led to my personal growth, as well as improvement of my English. In addition, I was happy to be blessed with kind teachers and classmates. Therefore, I'd like to go there again someday. I also recommend studying abroad!

## My school life in U of C

Kokona Tanaka

I stayed in Calgary from April 8 to July 23 to study English. I was able to create many wonderful memories while studying in Calgary. For example, being in an English-only environment, making many friends, playing together, and participating in activities included in the program. I have a lot of memories as I mentioned before, but in this essay, I'll write about my school life in which I spent the most time.

I studied in the University of Calgary. There were two courses: Language & Culture Course, and Spring Semester. Language & Culture Course was about 2 weeks. In this course, I learned about Canadian history and the first peoples of Canada. The feature of this course was that students not only took classes in classroom, but also went to some facilities where students can learn about history. Spring Semester was about 3 months long. In this course, there were 3 classes: Grammar class, Reading & Writing class, and Speaking & Listening class. I had to take some tests to classify level before taking classes. I took classes not only with Japanese but also with students from Korea, Mexico, Colombia, and so on. The good thing was that since

English was the only common language, I was able to improve my English and make friends through conversation. On Monday and Wednesday, class finished at 3 p.m. and on Tuesday and Thursday, class finished at 4 p.m. Only on Friday, class finished 12 p.m. so everyone was delighted. I used to buy coffee at Tim Hortons, which is the most famous coffee shop in Canada, during lunch time because the 3<sup>rd</sup> class was two-hours long and hard for me. Unfortunately, Japan doesn't have Tim Hortons and I went to drink there almost every day, so I really miss it. I hope Tim Hortons will open in Japan.

I was so happy to have met everyone I did in Calgary, such as my classmates, the instructors at U of C, and my host family through this study abroad. I miss them so much and I want to see again already. Calgary is a really nice place and if I have the chance I would go back.



## School Life at University of Calgary

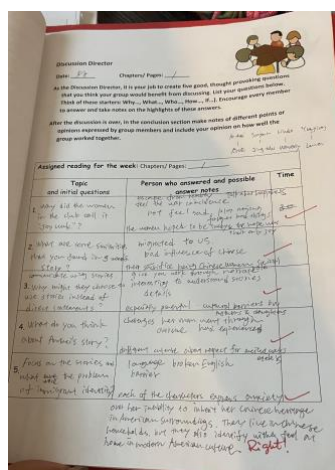
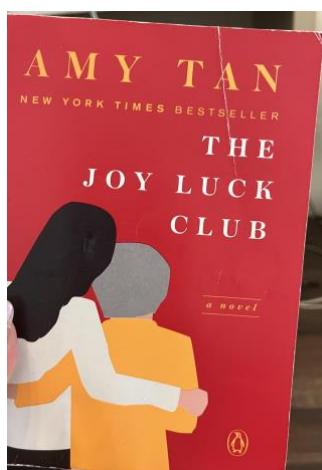
Ann Yabuta

I would like to report what my school life as a university student in a language programme was like. As the semester course started, we were divided into around ten classes by testing out our different English abilities. In my class, there was a disparity in nationality and age among classmates. I found it very interesting and was honored to be in such a class where people had a variety of cultures and backgrounds. The process of getting to know each of



my classmates was fun; they all were diligent and hardworking students who were eager to study English. There were three classes every day, grammar/writing, reading/vocabulary, and speaking/listening.

In the writing class, my teacher taught me how to write several sorts of academic essays, such as compare/contrast essay and problem/solution essay. I also learned essential writing skills when writing essays, how to paraphrase, summarize, cite, and make a reference. In addition, my class covered reading something I have never been taught before, writing formal emails. It was fun to study a higher level of grammar/writing and was definitely beneficial for my writing skills.



As for reading class, I had to read one book called *The Joy Luck Club*. Once every two weeks, we had a group discussion regarding this book. In a group, every member had a role that helped facilitate the discussion for us to comprehend what the book is about. For me, this activity was the most challenging. Reading an English book took me forever to truly understand the story. Because I reckon there were 10 words that I had

never heard of in just one page. We did read quite a long article every reading class and the pace of class was fast. Although it was very hard to keep up with the class, it surely helped me read faster. The class also enhanced my skimming and scanning skills. I learned many new vocabulary and collocations as well.

For speaking class, we got plenty of opportunities to talk and share opinions with classmates. It was difficult to talk about topics that I never faced before. I gave a presentation about business fraud and acupuncture. Through this activity, I was able to learn research tips to gather reliable and accurate information for presentations. I realized the importance of speaking up and constantly trying; my friends who had taken semesters before helped me a lot too. I was given a lot of homework which took me about three hours or more every day. At first, it was overwhelming and I thought I might not be able to make it till the end. However, I gradually got used to the amount of homework and the classes, and when I started to share my feelings with my classmates I felt more relaxed and could have the mindset that things would work out if I keep making an effort. I was relieved that I finished a whole semester getting credits properly after all the struggles and setbacks. Even though school life was more demanding than I expected, yet at the same time I enjoyed and took advantage of every part of it.