

Princeton in Ishikawa
Homestay Option: Yes
Maximum Language Credit: 2

Strong Points:

- course structure was well-designed and the instructors were all nice and good at explaining things in the most accessible way. homestay experience definitely allowed me to practice my Japanese in daily dialogues. we also had many cultural activities and were able to go on short trips in weekends. (2023)
- The extracurricular activities were some of the most memorable parts of the program that gave students an opportunity to meet Japanese students and locals, practice Japanese in a wide variety of contexts, and build a personal relationship with Japanese culture by directly engaging with various aspects of the culture that are historically and socially significant. It also provided time for students to build deeper relationships with peers in your classes and take time away from studies to enjoy Kanazawa and create memorable experiences in Japan. In terms of the class itself, the class was heavily discussion based that incorporated a lot of pair discussions and whole-class discussions/debates that made the class feel like a conversation between you, your peers, and the professor. These discussions provided a wonderful opportunity to challenge your Japanese usage and elasticity in being able to discuss a wide variety of topics that often centered society, social issues, education, government, cultural comparisons, personal experiences. My time in PII exposed me to a wide variety of contexts in which I was challenged to use Japanese which really strengthened my conversational Japanese and listening skills. (2023)
- Staying in homestay allowed me to practice Japanese with the natives (my host family) every day. Also, there were lots of cultural activities to join after class which is very fun. (2019)
- The teachers are really caring and work hard to teach us. I think having to constantly studying Japanese really helped me improved. I also enjoyed all cultural activities, which helped me learn a different side of Japan. (2019)
- The homestay experience was a great chance to practice the Japanese I learned in class, since I was able to talk with my host family every day. Also, I was able to make good friends with my classmates, with whom I had many shared interests. (2019)
- This program provides its participants with a unique opportunity to experience traditional Japanese culture and prototypical Japanese living style. PII and IFIE offer various cultural experiences for us to engage with Japanese traditions and cultures, which are both informative and interesting. Living with our host families enables us to practice our speaking skills and apply the acquired grammars and vocabularies into conversation. In addition, PII is an excellent place

to get to know people outside the Duke Community. As we spend at least 15 hours per week learning together, we are capable of developing friendship with some other students. (2018)

- You really learn so much through this program and really helped me strengthen my resolve to continue Japanese. It was so much fun due to the great teachers and amazing classmates. (2018)

Weak Points:

- pace may be fast but it's manageable (2023)
- I think the class itself is rather intense in the amount of daily assignments, work, and study which often made it feel as though you did not have time to explore the surrounding area. It was easy to get caught up in the course-load and the additional feelings of isolation as a foreigner made it easy to feel dissatisfied. However, I quickly learned that it was crucial to not focus on making everything perfect on your homework/assignments but to focus on trying your best to use your Japanese as much as you can whether when writing or speaking (even if it isn't perfect). (2023)
- The pace of the class goes very fast. I also found the textbook we used a little bit hard to understand. So, it required a lot of self-study. (2019)
- The flow of the program is inconsistent in my opinion. On some days, we would have a speech draft, a homework, quiz and reading to do. I think it would have been better if assignments were equally distributed. (2019)
- While the cultural activities were interesting, there were a few in number and a bit lacking in depth. I would have preferred a larger variety to choose from, as towards the end of the program there were many afternoon without activities. (2019)
- Sometimes the course moves by too quickly and it is sometimes hard to catch up to. However, there are always teachers available for additional help and classmates are also willing to help. (2018)
- The division of level 2 and 2.5 is mysterious. The organization of level 2 class is a little bit unreasonable. For each day, the three-hour learning period is divided into three courses. The instructors of the first and second courses tend to skip several materials and explain the usage of grammars and vocabularies vaguely in order to keep pace, while those in charge of the third course waste everyone's time teaching meaningless and useless expressions. There are around six instructors for level 2 class, and the qualities of these instructors vastly vary. Those affiliated to Princeton are sophisticated at teaching, yet several local instructors sometimes fail to explain the course materials clearly and instead only read the PowerPoint. Grading is also slightly mysterious, yet since the grades are counted as pass/fail this does not really matter. (2018)