



This program is conducted in collaboration with the Northern Illinois University Study Abroad Office and the Azabu University International Exchange Committee.

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Japan is one of the healthiest nations globally, renowned for its advanced technologies, rich culture, and historical wisdom. Its blend of modernity and tradition offers a unique backdrop for exploring sustainable practices. Students can immerse themselves in a society that values well-being, environmental consciousness, and cultural heritage.

Health is a fundamental human right, and regardless of your current major or occupation, you have the power to significantly impact individual and community health. Goal 3 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) emphasizes the importance of ensuring good health and well-being for all ages worldwide.

This program equips participants with the knowledge and skills to advance sustainable development beyond lifestyle choices. It addresses critical areas such as human rights, gender equality, fostering a culture of peace and non-violence, nurturing global citizenship, appreciating cultural diversity, and understanding the role of diverse cultures in sustainable development.



*Learn how you can make a difference!*

## Global Environmental Health LAB Study Abroad Program in Japan, 2024/2025

### Learning Objectives

1. **Holistic Perspective Development:** Cultivate a multifaceted understanding of health by exploring the intersections of science, technology, and culture, leading to a profound appreciation for personal and planetary well-being.
2. **Experiential Engagement:** Gain insights through direct involvement with Japan's health systems, green technologies, and cultural heritage.
3. **Cultural Wisdom Immersion:** Deepen personal health and global eco-consciousness by participating in Japan's spiritual and cultural traditions.
4. **Cross-Sectoral Synthesis:** Integrate knowledge from multiple disciplines to forge new solutions for health and environmental issues, drawing inspiration from Japan's efficient and harmonious practices.
5. **Global Health Advocacy:** Leverage Japan's exemplary health and sustainability models to contribute meaningfully to international health and ecological efforts.



*Use public transportation to reduce air pollution and walk in safe cities!*



### Program Sites

Participants will stay in **Sagamihara** and **Yokohama** in Kanagawa, Japan. Sagamihara, home to **AZABU UNIVERSITY**, is a suburban city within a day-trip distance of **Mt. Fuji** (UNESCO World Heritage). Yokohama, the capital of Kanagawa and Japan's second most populous city, is located between **Tokyo** (the current capital of Japan) and **Kamakura** (the birthplace of the Samurai era, the 12th-century capital of Japan). Yokohama played a significant role in U.S.-Japan history as a signing place for the Kanagawa Treaty in 1854 and was designated as "SDGs Future City" in 2018.

Azabu University, established in 1890, has been recognized by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology for its excellent One Health education and research in Veterinary Medicine and Life and Environmental Sciences. For more information about the university, please contact Dr. Shibata ([to-shibata@azabu-u.ac.jp](mailto:to-shibata@azabu-u.ac.jp)).

### Coursework

- Predeparture orientation
- Lectures at Azabu University
- Field trips to various industries related to One Health and cultural sites
- Interdisciplinary group discussions and daily reflections
- Dissemination of your narratives or creative expressions



*Explore Yokohama: The past, present, and future!*



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Holistic Perspective Development:**
  - Learn One Health (Nexus of Environment-Human-Animal Health) at Azabu University.
  - Discuss the best practices and challenges from various industries and consumer perspectives.
  - Identify your contributions toward making a difference in the SDGs based on your education and future careers.
- Experiential Engagement**
  - Meet managers, healthcare professionals, and residents at a senior and assisted living facility to learn the best practices and challenges
  - Meet first responders and practice disaster preparedness at a disaster reduction center.
  - Meet the municipal solid waste manager at a recycling center to learn about the importance and dark sides of waste management.
- Cultural Wisdom Immersion:**
  - Experience animism in daily life and mindfulness in serene temple gardens.
  - Learn about harmony, respect, and tranquility through traditional (e.g., animism) and modern (e.g., Otaku) cultures.
  - Celebrate Shōgatsu (Japanese New Year), which embodies health, nature, prosperity ties, and collective aspirations.
- Cross-Sectoral Synthesis:**
  - Find common interests with fellow participants who have different majors and cultural backgrounds.
  - Develop networks with people from diverse fields—health, engineering, arts—to address real-world challenges.
  - Apply science, technology, and cultural wisdom to propose innovative solutions.
- Global Health Advocacy:**
  - Engage in dialogues on global health and sustainability.
  - Investigate Japan's governing models and contribute findings to international efforts.
  - Share your knowledge, experience, and passion with the world.



*Discover the commonalities in ancient animism, traditional culture, and the SDGs!*



*Harvest happiness at an urban farm!*



*Enjoy Washoku, UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage!*



*Make your 2025 New Year's resolution come true!*

## Global Environmental Health LAB Study Abroad Program in Japan, 2024/2025

### DIRECTOR: [Tomoyuki Shibata, Ph.D.](#)

Your study abroad program director is a descendant of the last samurai and possibly even a ninja 😊

Dr. Shibata is a distinguished international scholar dedicated to addressing environmental, health, and social issues through interdisciplinary research. As the Co-Founder and Executive Director of the Global Environmental Health LAB (GEH LAB, a 501(C)(3) organization), he has mentored numerous students and young professionals from diverse academic and cultural backgrounds. His efforts have significantly advanced the UN Sustainable Development Goals through pioneering research, scientific collaboration, and comprehensive capacity-building initiatives. In addition to his role at GEH LAB, Dr. Shibata is a Professor of Public Health at Northern Illinois University and a Visiting Professor of Veterinary Science at Azabu University in Japan.

### Program Fee: \$3,770

- The fee could be reduced depending on the enrollment numbers, available funding, and chosen trip durations.
- Group discounts and installments are available.
- **Includes:** All accommodation (December 27, 2024, to January 5, 2025), ground transportation at the field site, liability insurance, all fees for cultural excursions, seminars, educational materials, and access to international and local experts.
- **Does not include:** Airfare, medical insurance, emergency evacuation insurance, regular meals, and personal purchases.

### Application Steps



- Apply today!
- Meet the program director virtually.
- Pay a 10%-deposit by 10/11/2024 to secure your spot.
- Start fundraising

### Academic Credit Hours Option

3-credit hours are available through NIU [e.g., Study Abroad Program (INTL 301), Special Topics in Environmental Science (ENVS 491), Special Topics in Japanese Language, Literature, Linguistics or Culture (FLJA 400), Independent Study in Health Studies (HLTH 494), Study Abroad Program (INTL 501), Special Topic in Health Studies (HLTH 673)].

忍 = Shinobi or Ninja



This is Shibata



*Eat, Play, and Learn!*



**GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH LAB**  
LEARN | ACT | BUILD

Contact Dr. Shibata now to schedule an appointment! (tshibata@gehlab.org)



**Northern Illinois University**

For more information, please email the Study Abroad Office.



## Global Environmental Health LAB Study Abroad Program in Japan, 2024/2025

### Shōgatsu Special Schedule (\*Tentative)

Japanese teachers, or “sensei,” always tell their students that a field trip begins when they leave home and ends when they return safely. The program starts on Thursday, December 26, 2024, with your departure to Japan, and ends on January 5, 2025, when you return home to the US or another country. You'll handle your travel arrangements if you arrive early or stay longer.

Date	Sites and Learning Topics
12/26/2024 (Thu)	Depart your home for Japan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender equality in different industries (SDG 5)</li> <li>• Japanese visual arts (SDG 4)</li> </ul>
12/27/2024 (Fri)	<a href="#">Tokyo Haneda Airport</a> to <a href="#">Azabu University</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public transportation system (SDG 8, 7)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Japanese Toilet</a> (SDG 6)</li> </ul>
12/28/2024 (Sat)	<a href="#">Yokohama Disaster Risk Reduction Learning Center</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disaster preparedness (SDG 9, 13)</li> <li>• Environmental Health and Animism (SDG 13, 14, 15)</li> </ul> <a href="#">Yokohama Recycling Center</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable city and community (SDG 11)</li> <li>• 3 Rs: Reduce, Reuse, &amp; Recycle (SDG 12)</li> </ul>
12/29/2024 (Sun)	<a href="#">Chureito Pagoda/Arakurafuji Sengenjinja</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History of wars (SDG 4, 3)</li> <li>• Culture of peace and non-violence (SDG 16)</li> <li>• Inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable human settlements (SDG 11)</li> </ul> <a href="#">SDGs Manabikan</a> or <a href="#">Oshino Hakkai</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature and sustainable tourism (SDG 15, 8)</li> <li>• UNESCO World Heritage (SDG 4)</li> </ul>
12/30/2024 (Mon)	<a href="#">Azabu University</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interdisciplinary education (SDG 4)</li> <li>• One Health (SDG 3, 14, 15)</li> </ul> <a href="#">Claire Residence Yokohama Tokaichiba</a> (senior and assisted living facility) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aging society and senior health care (SDG 3, 2, 8, 12)</li> <li>• Graphic Medicine and visual haiku comic (SDG 4,3)</li> </ul>
12/31/2024 (Tue)	<a href="#">Yokohama Minatomirai</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation (SDG 8)</li> <li>• Cultural diversity and immersion (SDG 4)</li> </ul> <a href="#">Shibuya Crossing</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection of 2024 (SDGs)</li> </ul>
01/01/2025 (Wed)	<a href="#">Kamakura</a> , 12th-century capital of Japan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Year celebration (SDG 4)</li> <li>• Urban green places (SDG 3, 11, 15)</li> <li>• Peace, health, &amp; prosperity (SDG 16, 3, 1)</li> </ul>

## Global Environmental Health LAB Study Abroad Program in Japan, 2024/2025

01/02/2025 (Thu)	<p><a href="#">Toyosu Senkyakumanrai</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable seafood industry (SDG 14, 8)</li> <li>• Healthy food (SDG 2)</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Akihabara District</a>, electronic &amp; Otaku culture hub</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modern technologies (SDG 9)</li> <li>• Social, economic and political inclusion of all (SDG 10)</li> </ul>
01/03/2025 (Fri)	<p><a href="#">Yokohama VeryBerry</a> (strawberry farm)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable &amp; urban food production (SDG 2)</li> <li>• Customer-participating business model (SDG 8)</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Yokohama Ramen Museum</a> or <a href="#">Yokohama Cup Noodle Museum</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End Poverty (SDG 1)</li> <li>• Zero hunger (SDG 2)</li> </ul>
01/04/2025 (Sat)	<p><a href="#">Azabu University</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presenting narrative and visual expressions of your contribution to the SDGs (later compiled in an anthology)</li> <li>• Global partnership (SDG 17)</li> </ul>
01/05/2025 (Sun)	<p>Yokohama/Tokyo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Last-minute cultural excursion</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Tokyo Haneda Airport</a>/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flight back to the US</li> <li>• Share your experiences with your family 😊</li> </ul>

\*Daily schedule and site visits may vary.

If you have any specific requests for activities or site visits, please contact the program director as soon as possible to discuss potential opportunities.



*The Japanese dragon, or 'Ryū,' is deeply associated with water and is often seen as a water deity controlling rain and storms. Ryū symbolizes wisdom, strength, and protection.*



*The Kamakura Great Buddha, or 'Kamakura Daibutsu,' has been meditating since 1252 and continued to do so even after its hall was destroyed by the 1498 tsunami caused by a massive earthquake.*



<https://gehlab.org/about-us>

**Join GEH LAB!** Together, let's promote and support safe, healthy environments and global health on local, regional, and global scales. We achieve this through collaborative public health research, scientific engagement, and capacity-building activities.