

Winter Japanese Language & Culture Seminar

— “Winter Japanese Language Seminar: Learning about the Snow and Culture of Niigata”—

1. Purpose of the Program

The University of Niigata Prefecture (UNP) is delighted to invite students from our partner universities to participate in our **10-day winter program, “*Winter Japanese Language & Culture Seminar: Learning about the Snow and Culture of Niigata*,” running from January 13 to January 22, 2027.**

This program is a Japanese language seminar held in Niigata, a region of Japan known for its heavy snow. It offers a unique opportunity to learn about the area's winter culture, history, and food culture.

Participants will go beyond classroom learning. Through interviews with local residents and field trips, students will learn about the knowledge and ways of life that have helped people live in a snowy environment. They will also have the chance to experience Niigata's rich natural environment and local culture firsthand.

The seminar includes Intercultural Collaborative Learning (ICL), in which students from different cultural backgrounds work together on group projects. Through these activities, students will develop practical communication skills and learn to understand different perspectives. Japanese students will join the Japanese language classes, cultural activities, and field trips, providing many opportunities for interaction and friendship with students of the same generation.

During the fieldwork and cultural activities, participants will be asked to take photos and videos of their experiences. They will then use these materials to share what they have learned and experienced in Japanese through social media platforms or video-sharing services.

We invite you to use the Japanese you study every day in real-life situations while enjoying Niigata's beautiful winter scenery. We hope this program will help you build confidence in using Japanese and deepen your understanding of Japanese culture and society.

2. Tentative Schedule (*Details to be confirmed)

	Date	Period 1 (8:50–10:20)	Period 2 (10:35–12:05)	Period 3 (13:00–14:30)	
	Jan 12 (Tue)			Arrival in Niigata Check-in at a hotel in Niigata City (on your own)	
1	Jan 13 (Wed)	• Opening Ceremony / Orientation • Welcome Party (Tea Party)	Japanese Class (1) • Geography & History of Niigata	Japanese Class (2) • Basics of Japanese cuisine & Niigata’s Food Culture	Free Time
2	Jan 14 (Thu)	Japanese Class (3) • Vocabulary for Ingredients and Cooking	Japanese Class (4) • Preparation for Fieldwork	Fieldwork (1) • Strolling and Shopping at Pia Bandai Market	
3	Jan 15 (Fri)	Fieldwork (2) • Cooking Session — Let’s Cook Basic Japanese Dishes (Making Dashi broth and cooking rice)		Japanese Class (5) • Review of Fieldwork & Report Writing	Free Time
4	Jan 16 (Sat)	Japanese Class (6) • Preparation for Fieldwork	Japanese Class (7) • Preparation for Fieldwork	Free Time	
5	Jan 17 (Sun)	Travel from Niigata to Tokamachi		Fieldwork (3) in Tokamachi ("The Ultimate Snow Country") Stay overnight in Tokamachi	
6	Jan 18 (Mon)	Fieldwork (4) in Tokamachi ("The Ultimate Snow Country") Stay overnight in Tokamachi			
7	Jan 19 (Tue)	Travel from Tokamachi back to Niigata		Free Time	
8	Jan 20 (Wed)	Japanese Class (8) • Review of Tokamachi Fieldwork & Report Writing	Japanese Class (9) • Japanese Tea Culture & Traditional Sweets	Fieldwork (5) • Nerikiri (Wagashi) Making & Japanese Tea Workshop	Free Time
9	Jan 21 (Thu)	Japanese Class (10) • Review of Fieldwork & Report Writing	Japanese Class (11) • Preparation for Final Presentation	Japanese Class (12) • Preparation for Final Presentation	Free Time
10	Jan 22 (Fri)	Japanese Class (13) • Preparation for Final Presentation	• Japanese Class (14) • Final Presentation • Closing Ceremony / Adjournment		

3. Language Requirement

All lectures and activities in this seminar will be conducted entirely in Japanese. This program is designed for students at an intermediate level who can handle basic everyday communication in Japanese (equivalent to JLPT N3). Please note that individuals with no prior knowledge of Japanese (complete beginners) and beginner-level students are not eligible to participate.

4. Participation Conditions

Applicants must meet both of the following requirements:

- (1) **Japanese Language Proficiency:** Applicants must have previous experience studying Japanese and be able to use Japanese at an intermediate level (approximately JLPT N3 or CEFR B1) or higher.
- (2) **Sharing Learning Experiences:** Applicants must be willing to post about their program experiences on social media in Japanese, accompanied by translations or captions in English or their native language(s).

5. Participation Eligibility

Regular and international students enrolled at UNP, and students (both undergraduate and graduate level) from the following UNP partner universities:

Heilongjiang University (China), University of International Business and Economics (China), Shanghai International Studies University (China), The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong (Hong Kong, China), Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages (Taiwan), Hankuk University of Foreign Studies (South Korea), Cyber Hankuk University of Foreign Studies (South Korea), Pacific National University (Russia), University of Hawaii Community Colleges (the United States), University of Hawaii at Manoa (the United States), Duquesne University (the United States), Saint Mary's University (Canada), University of Ottawa (Canada), Dalhousie University (Canada), Ondokuz Mayis University (Turkey), Bogor Agricultural University (Indonesia), University of the Philippines Los Baños (Philippines), De La Salle University (Philippines), Mykolas Romeris University (Lithuania), Mongolian University of Science and Technology (Mongolia), National University of Mongolia (Mongolia)

*If there are many applicants, we may conduct screening through online interviews or other means.

6. Fees and Expenses

The seminar tuition fee (Includes all Japanese language classes, cultural experiences, workshops, transportation between Niigata and Tokamachi, as well as within both cities) and accommodation fees during the program (for 10 nights from January 12 to January 21) are **FREE OF CHARGE***.

Participants are responsible for their own round-trip travel expenses to Niigata and the cost of meals during the program.

*This seminar is supported by the Niigata Prefectural International Exchange Promotion Fund.

7. Certificate of Participation

Students who participate in all scheduled activities will receive a Certificate of Completion.

8. Application, Deadline, and Inquiries

Application Deadline: September 30, 2026

How to Apply: Students who wish to participate should apply through the international exchange / study abroad office at their home university.

Inquiries: For any questions regarding the content of the seminar, please contact us via email:
UNP International Center: gyoumu@unii.ac.jp (Inquiries can be made in Japanese or English)