

Academic Bulletin for Japan: University of Tsukuba 2025-26

Introduction

The Academic Bulletin is the CSU International Programs (CSU IP) “catalog” and provides academic information about the program at the University of Tsukuba in Japan. This bulletin supersedes any previous bulletin(s) published.¹

CSU IP participants must read this publication in conjunction with the Academic Guide for CSU IP Participants (also known as the “Academic Guide”). The Academic Guide contains academic policies which will be applied to all IP participants while abroad. Topics include but are not limited to CSU Registration, Enrollment Requirements, Minimum/Maximum Unit Load in a Semester, Attendance, Examinations, Assignment of Grades, Grading Symbols, Credit/No Credit Option, Course Withdrawals, and other policies. The Academic Guide also contains information on academic planning, how courses get credited to your degree, and the academic reporting process including when to expect your academic report at the end of your year abroad.

To access the Academic Guide, go to our [website](#) and click on the year that pertains to your year abroad. For general information about the Japan programs, refer to the CSU IP website under “[Programs](#)”.

Academic Program Information

The International Programs in Tsukuba, Japan is affiliated with the University of Tsukuba, which is a public institution, ranked in the top 10 universities in Japan.

CSU IP students who are selected to study at the University of Tsukuba attend as exchange students and are considered “Tokubetsu Chokogakusei (Special Audit Students)” and mainly register for courses conducted in English that are designed for “Junior Year at Tsukuba Program” (JTP) participants.

JTP courses consist of three categories: JTP academic courses, Japan-related courses, and Japanese language courses. More than 260 JTP academic courses are offered in English in such diverse disciplines as international studies, social sciences, humanities, biological sciences, and engineering.

At the University of Tsukuba, all CSU students are required to take Japanese language courses and other academic areas of study for a minimum total of 14 Tsukuba units each semester (which equals 14 CSU semester units). Students can take up to 19 units of courses per semester without CSU IP Office approval.

The students who are selected to study at the University of Tsukuba focus their studies on Japanese language and culture courses, supplemented by courses taught in English during the year which can be in any subject area based on availability and prerequisites.

The University of Tsukuba calculates 1 class period (75 minutes in length) as 1.5 hours.

Course Type	Course Hours
Lectures and Seminar	15 hours (1.5 hours per week × 10 weeks)
Foreign Languages	22.5 hours (1.5 hours per week × 15 weeks)

Note: One (1) unit of credit at the University of Tsukuba requires 45 hours of academic workload in the context of the course structure, academic outcomes, and self-directed learning other than course work.

¹ This bulletin has been updated to clarify guidance regarding the assignment of the CSU grade of WU (Withdrawal Unauthorized). This clarification does not constitute a change in policy.

Unit Enrollment

CSU IP requires that CSU IP students enroll in a minimum of 14 units each semester with any combination of Japanese language courses and academic lecture courses. While students are permitted to take up to 19 units without requesting approval from CSU IP, students should be cautioned from taking excessive units particularly in their first semester of study.

Course Registration Unit Requirements for The University of Tsukuba

Categories of Courses	CSU IP		Tsukuba	
	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
Japanese Language Courses	14	19	*10	N/A
Academic Lecture Courses				
Total Number of Credits Required per Semester	14	19	10	N/A

*While the minimum unit requirement for the University of Tsukuba is to enroll in more than 10 hours of workload (8 class meetings/about 10 – 12 units) per week, CSU IP’s minimum unit requirement is **14 CSU semester units per semester**. Under-enrollment may result in academic consequences including dismissal from the program.

Academic Calendar

The academic year in Japan is divided into two semesters which takes place during the following months: early April to September (spring semester) and early October to mid-February (fall semester). CSU IP students start in the fall semester (Semester 1) and continue to the spring semester (Semester 2) in the following year. To view academic calendar dates, click on the [link](#).

The semester dates are as follows:

Semester	Start Date	End Date
Semester 1: Fall	Early October	Mid-February
Semester 2: Spring	Early April	Early August

*Note that academic year dates will be available in January of each year.

Fall Semester 2025 (Modules A & B / Modules A, B & C) – October 1 to March 31

Classes Begin (All Modules)	October 1
Classes End (Modules A & B)	December 19
Final Exams (Modules A & B)	December 22 to December 26
Winter Break	December 27 to January 4
Class End (Modules A,B & C)	February 12
Final Exams (Modules A, B & C)	February 4, 6 – 16
Supplementary Date for Final Exams	February 13, 16
Spring Break	February 17 to March 31

Dates for Spring 2026 are not released until January 2026. Below are dates for Spring 2025, to give an approximation of the dates for Spring 2026.

Spring Semester 2025 (Modules A & B / Modules A, B & C) – April 1 to September 30

Classes Begin (All Modules)	April 14
Class End (Modules A, B & C)	August 7
Final Exams (Modules A, B & C)	August 1 to August 8

Semester and Module at the University of Tsukuba

Each semester is further subdivided into three 5-week sessions called “modules” which run sequentially (Module A, B and C). One semester goes over for 15 weeks, and 16th week serves as an exam week.

There are three major types of course periods:

- Type 1: Modules A, B & C (5 weeks each, 15 weeks in total plus final exam week)
- Type 2: Modules A & B (5 weeks each, 10 weeks in total plus final exam week)
- Type 3: Modules A or B or C (5 weeks in total plus final exam week)

Month	Apr - May	Jun - Jul	Aug – Sep	Oct - Nov	Dec - Jan	Feb - Mar		
Semester	Spring Semester				Fall Semester			
Module (5-week units)	Spring Module A	Spring Module B	Spring Module C	Break (Summer)	Fall Module A	Fall Module B	Fall Module C	Break (Spring)
Examples of Class Implementation Type 1: 15 weeks + exam	→				→			
Examples of Class Implementation Type 2: 10 weeks + exam	→		→		→		→	
Others: 5 weeks classes or 5 weeks plus 10 weeks + exam	→	→	→		→	→	→	
	→	→			→	→		

Academic Culture

The Global Commons and the Division of Student Exchange offers advice and counseling to international students to make their studies at the University and their stay in Japan productive and enjoyable. Upon arrival at the University of Tsukuba, all exchange students must attend an orientation program organized by the Global Commons and the Division of Student Exchange. It is designed to help students settle into life on campus and in Japan as smoothly as possible.

The University of Tsukuba will assign a faculty member to each exchange student as his/her/their academic advisor. Advisors will provide students with advice regarding their major fields. In addition, a tutor will also be appointed to each exchange student. The tutors can assist with various administrative procedures, language study, and course work.

Traditionally, there is not much very close interaction between professors and undergraduate students at Japanese universities, either inside or outside the classroom, until their senior year, at which point they start taking senior thesis seminar with their thesis advisor. The faculty member and the seminar students usually form close relationship. However, at the University of Tsukuba, which was re-established in 1973 on a new concept of “Open University” to meet the needs of the next generation in a brand new “Tsukuba Science City”, professors are inspiring and nurturing, and fellow students are friendly and supportive.

Grade and Unit Conversion

The grading at the University of Tsukuba is based on the following system, which directly converts the result of student’s accomplishments in the course to a letter grade. Tsukuba does not grant an academic credit for the D grade, which is the equivalent of an F grade at CSU.

Raw Score in the Course	Tsukuba Grade Issued	CSU Grade Equivalent
90-100%	A+	A
80-89%	A	A
70-79%	B	B
60-69%	C	C
59% and below	D (No credits granted)	F

Note that the highest grade that is reported to a CSU campus is an A.

The CSU grade of WU (Withdrawal Unauthorized) may be given in some circumstances. Refer to the Academic Guide for additional grade information.

Class attendance is mandatory, and absences and tardiness are considered in determining grades. The attendance policy is very rigid and too many absences may result in a failing grade.

Unit Conversion

Below are the guidelines which are used to convert University of Tsukuba credits to CSU units.

Tsukuba Credit	CSU Semester Unit	CSU Quarter Unit
1 credit	1 unit	1.5 units

University Courses

Japanese Language Courses

Japanese language courses are provided at the Japanese Language Education Division of the Center for Education of Global Communication/CEGLOC (formerly known as the International Study Center). Students are placed at an appropriate level based on their performance on a placement or level assessment test. This level is not based on the amount of students’ knowledge of Japanese, but on the student’s ability to perform in Japanese, and their communication skills. Therefore, levels do not necessarily correspond to the number of hours or years students may have studied prior to coming to Japan.

The Japanese language courses are organized as follows:

1. 15-week Japanese courses for beginners
2. 15-week Skill-based classes in listening, speaking, reading and writing for intermediate and advanced levels,
3. Special purpose classes

Japanese language courses are generally 15-week courses and therefore considered a “three module courses” which spans across the entire semester. Lower-level courses will meet four or five times per week while more advanced courses may meet less per week.

For information about the Japanese language courses offered by CEGLOC (Center for Education of Global Communication), go to <http://www.cegloc.tsukuba.ac.jp/page/dir000755.html>

Japanese language courses at the University of Tsukuba are offered in 8 different levels.

Japanese Courses

Placement Level at Tsukuba	Level Designation and Description at Tsukuba University	CSU Course Level
1	Beginner	Lower Division
2	Beginner	Lower Division
3	Beginner	Lower Division
4	Pre-Intermediate	Upper Division
5	Intermediate	Upper Division
6	Upper-Intermediate	Upper Division
7	Advanced	Upper Division
8	Advanced	Upper Division

Kanji Courses

Placement Level at Tsukuba	Level Designation and Description at Tsukuba University	CSU Course Level
1	Introductory	Lower Division
2	Beginner	Lower Division
3	Beginner	Lower Division
4	Beginner	Lower Division
5	Intermediate	Upper Division
6	Upper-Intermediate	Upper Division
7	Pre-Advanced	Upper Division
8	Advanced	Upper Division

Japanese as a Foreign Language

Courses on Japan-related subjects are established for international students or returnee students who have attended secondary education in a foreign country for a considerable period of time. The lectures are given in Japanese. In order to enroll in these lectures, you need to possess a Japanese proficiency level of **J7 or above** in the courses offered at the Japanese Language Education Division of the CEGLOC.

JTP Academic Courses - Courses Taught in English

JTP courses consist of three categories: JTP academic courses, Japan-related courses and Japanese language courses. More than 260 JTP courses are taught in English in such diverse disciplines as international studies, social

sciences, humanities, natural sciences and engineering. CSU students are required to enroll in the Japanese language courses and JTP academic courses taught in English during the year which can be in any subject area based on availability and prerequisites. Students should select courses for JTP students. They may also enroll in courses offered through the “Global 30” Programs if space is available.

Course Information

Information on courses available to exchange students or JTP students including Japanese language courses, Japanese as a Foreign Language, and JTP academic courses, becomes available in April prior to the fall semester. These will provide an idea of the courses that are offered. Students are advised to check the University website periodically for updates.

Information on the University of Tsukuba can be found on the websites below. Note that some information for 2025-26 may not be available at the time this publication became available. Keep checking the websites for updates.

Below are useful links about the University and its exchange program.

University of Tsukuba:

<http://www.tsukuba.ac.jp/en/>

The University of Tsukuba Exchange Program:

<http://www.tsukuba.ac.jp/en/study-tsukuba/exchange-students/programs>

<https://www.tsukuba.ac.jp/en/academics/international-exchange-students/programs/>

Application Guide 2025-26:

<https://www.tsukuba.ac.jp/en/academics/international-exchange-students/programs/application-guide.pdf>

List of Course Catalogue for Undergraduate students in English Program Taught in English:

<https://www.tsukuba.ac.jp/en/academics/ug-courses-openclass/>

Information for Searching Courses (Course Jukebox/Kdb):

<https://www.tsukuba.ac.jp/en/academics/international-exchange-students/programs/information-for-searching-courses.pdf>

Online Syllabus: <https://kdb.tsukuba.ac.jp/>

*Change language to English in the menu.

For questions about CSU IP academic policies and program requirements, contact ipacademics@calstate.edu

For questions about Tsukuba registration or courses, contact Ms. Hiroko Tanaka at csuip@calstate.edu