Dear Temple Japan Study Abroad Program Participant,

We hope you’re doing well. As the COVID-19 surge in many countries around the world continues, we appreciate that the news can be worrisome, so we wanted to check in to provide an update on the situation in Tokyo and reaffirm that, at this time, our Temple Japan staff continues to plan for your arrival and looks forward to hosting you this spring 2021 semester. We would also like to provide some important pre-departure information, which can be found further below. Please read this message in its entirety.

**Current Situation in Tokyo and Japan**

After a period of stability of COVID-19 infection rates, like many countries, Japan is seeing an increase in reported cases. Last week, Tokyo topped 500 cases per day (0.0036% of Tokyo’s population) on three consecutive days. On Tuesday, Tokyo reported only 186 new cases (0.00132% of Tokyo’s population). On Wednesday, it reported 401 new cases. Most of those newly infected are in their twenties and thirties. Of note, those in Tokyo with severe symptoms total about 50 people. Nationwide, Japan has been seeing about 2,000 cases of COVID-19 per day with its population of 126 million. Tuesday saw 1,206 new cases, and Wednesday totaled 1,931. In comparison, the United States is experiencing around 175,000 cases per day.
In an effort to help mitigate concerns, the Japanese government is working to balance preventative measures with ordinary daily activities. Today, Tokyo issued additional guidance designed to slow the spread of infection including urging bars, restaurants, and karaoke parlors to close by 10 p.m. for the next three weeks. There have also been additional recommendations for mask wearing inside restaurants. The government continues to emphasize the importance of mask wearing, good hand hygiene, and avoiding the three C’s (closed spaces with poor ventilation, crowded places, and close contact settings such as close-range conversations). Continued telecommuting is encouraged too. At this time, life in Tokyo continues pretty normally. Businesses, restaurants, entertainment venues, and museums all remain open. The government continues to encourage travel to all parts of Japan through subsidies except for Sapporo and Osaka. Much of daily life is rather routine. Temple Japan continues to plan to have 40% of spring semester classes in-person and the remainder online.

It is possible that there will be additional restrictions between now and the start of the semester, which may or may not be in place when students arrive. As we have discussed previously, this semester will be unique and require immense patience and flexibility as restrictions change. Temple Japan remains prepared to adjust the program as necessary. We will keep you updated on restrictions and contact students and their emergency contacts immediately if there are significant changes that impact the program or our ability to deliver a successful student experience.

If you would like to follow the news on cases in Tokyo, and elsewhere in Japan, we’d like to remind you of the following resources:

- Up-to-date COVID-19 data for Tokyo can be accessed through the Tokyo Metropolitan Government website
- Up-to-date COVID-19 data for all of Japan can be accessed through the World Health Organization website.
- Additional COVID-19 information in English can be found on the following sites:
  - Tokyo Metropolitan Government COVID-19 Information
  - U.S. Embassy in Japan COVID-19 Information
  - The Japan Times COVID-19 News Updates

**Visas**

Detailed visa instructions were posted to your online study abroad portal on November 18. It is essential that you read those carefully now if you haven’t already done so.

**Important Visa Reminders:**

- Students who are eligible to apply through the New York Consulate are required to submit their visa application materials to Education Abroad, following the instructions provided, by December 1.
- Students who are applying through consulates other than New York will apply for their visas independently and must complete the Consulate Information Form in their online study abroad portals by December 1. All Certificates of Eligibility (COEs) will be shipped to independent consulate students by December 4th at the latest via UPS. Please apply for your visa as soon as you receive your COE.
- With the COVID surge in the U.S., consulates may make changes to their operations, so it will be important for you to check regularly to make sure you have the most current hours, etc. If anything is unclear about their operations, or you would like confirmation, we suggest reaching out to the consulate via phone or email.

Pre-Travel COVID Testing and Health Monitoring Requirements

The Pre-Travel COVID Testing and Health Monitoring Requirements document in your online study abroad portal contains essential instructions that you must follow in order to enter Japan. Please review that document now and follow all of the instructions carefully. As explained in the document, at this time you should identify COVID-19 testing facilities that will meet the Japanese government’s requirements so that you have plans for testing well in advance.

Booking Flights

The Flight Booking Instructions and Guidance document is now posted to your online study abroad portal. **Be sure to read these instructions thoroughly before purchasing flights.**

Pledge

In addition to the TUJ-Government pledge that you will receive with your COE and submit with your visa documentation, all program participants are required to sign the **TUJ-Student pledge**, which will soon be available in your online study abroad portal. Students under the age of 20 are considered minors in Japan and therefore a parent signature will also be required.

Smartphone and Required Apps

We would like to remind you that the Japanese Ministry of Health Labor and Welfare is requiring that all new residents to Japan download the ministry’s contact tracing app called COCOA, and also to turn on your location tracker within a map device such as Google Maps on your smartphone. You will also need to download the LINE app. **You will therefore need to bring to Japan a smartphone with which you can use a Wi-Fi signal and Bluetooth.**

If you choose to get a local SIM card or cell phone, you will be able to do so after the quarantine period. More detailed information about cell phones can be found in your Program Manual and will be discussed during your pre-departure and on-site orientations.
Personal Health and Safety

Following Public Health Guidelines Now and While in Japan
It is important to remain vigilant about your personal health prior to departure as well as once you arrive. As cases rise here in the U.S., and you consider plans for the holiday season, it is best to carefully follow public health guidelines and limit possible exposure to COVID-19 at all times but especially in the two weeks leading up to your departure for Japan. Note that some people who have had COVID-19 continue to test positive for a long time. Entry to Japan will not be permitted without a negative pre-departure COVID-19 test result.

We’d like to thank students who have participated in our small group sessions in which we’ve been discussing your role in following public health measures prior to departure and while in Japan.

Required Health and Safety Modules
Temple has developed an online health and safety training for all students participating in programs abroad. The training consists of four modules, which have been deployed to you through Canvas, and which encompass essential content for all study abroad students: Health, Safety and Security, Preparing to Go, and Making the Most of It. Please complete the modules by Friday, December 18. If you did not receive an invitation to complete the modules via your Temple email, please contact Program Manager Belinda Christensen at belinda@temple.edu. Note that non-Temple students will need to submit their SSN into Temple’s Banner system to gain access to Temple systems, including the health and safety training modules.

Health Information Form and Health Plan Check-Ins
If you have not completed your Health Information Form, please do so right away. Belinda Christensen is currently scheduling individual health plan check-in appointments with students based on their health and prescription information. If you received an email from Belinda, please schedule an appointment with her before December 11. Or, if you did not receive an email but have any questions or concerns about your health, mental health or prescriptions in Japan, please send an email to belinda@temple.edu to schedule a time to talk.

Bringing Medications/Medical Equipment to Japan - Yakkan Shoumei
We remind you that if you plan to take any allowable prescription medications or medical equipment with you to Japan, you need to apply for a Yakkan Shoumei. Visit http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/policy/health-medical/pharmaceuticals/01.html (click the document link next to “Q&A for those who are bringing medicines into Japan” for instructions and the application). If you have not completed this application, you should
do so immediately to ensure you will receive your Yakkan Shoumei before your departure.

**International Travel Medical Insurance Letters**
We are issuing letters verifying international travel medical insurance coverage to all program participants. This documentation will be required to enter Japan, so you will need to bring it with you; please keep it in a safe place with other important travel documents. For independent consulate students, these letters will be included with your COE mailings. For New York Consulate students, these letters will be provided with your visas.

**Course Registration**
We will be registering you for Temple Japan courses in the next two weeks.

**Summary of Upcoming Deadlines**

**December 1**
- Visa application and supporting documents for New York Consulate students
- Consulate Information Form (in online portal) for independent (Non-New York Consulate) students
- Last day to receive a refund of the $200 **housing deposit** if withdrawing from the program (see refund policies for details)

**December 15**
- Confirmed departing flight information
- TUJ-student pledge
- Last day to receive a refund of the $200 **program deposit** if withdrawing from the program (see refund policies for details)

**December 18**
- Completion of health and safety modules in Canvas

**14 Days Prior to Departure (daily all the way through departure day)**
- Health monitoring check-in with TUJ

**Prior to Departure**
- Final Education Abroad check-in ensuring you have everything you need for departure

We will keep you informed about any updates or changes to the planned program.
Please send any questions or concerns to the Temple Japan program manager, Madelyn Sullivan, madelyn@temple.edu.

Wishing you a happy and healthy Thanksgiving!