



FGL Community

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2022

The summer has given a warm welcome to all of us for arriving in Sendai!

The corona virus is not off the face of the earth just yet, but some restrictions have been lifted, and all of our friends have finally entered Japan. Although this summer has started with some rainy and foggy days, let us look forward to cheerful days of festivities and warm nights of fireworks!

Congratulations on finishing another semester, meaning another year of college done! In celebration, we shall enjoy the summer fun and holidays ahead of us, but before that, let's take a peek at some of this season's newsletter.

In this edition, we will review a special lesson about the Tanabata festival organized by the Sendai Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Next, we have also shared a review about Tohoku University's cafeterias along with the results of an online survey we conducted. Feel free to explore the other cafeterias that you may have not heard of before! Make sure to stay cool and hydrated, especially with the refreshing shiso drink. Make sure to try out the recipes! Following that, while spring has passed, it does not take away our opportunity for flower viewing, as you can go to Kitayama, Sendai, for water lily viewing. There is more to see in this newsletter, so have a good look at it! Enjoy the read!

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Sendai Tanabata Festival

(Taken from <https://www.japan-guide.com/e/e5158.html>)

Recently In FGL

Special Lesson on Tanabata Festival

organized by the Sendai Chamber of Commerce and Industry

On July 15, 2022, a special lecture on Tanabata Festival, which was organized by the Sendai Chamber of Commerce and Industry, was held in the downtown Sendai. Around 10 international students from Tohoku University and around 20 female business leaders in Sendai participated and enjoyed the lesson!

The purpose of the event was for the participants to learn about the local festival through making small Tanabata decorations. It also aimed to provide an opportunity for business leaders in Sendai to interact with international students to learn about each other. The event was held in Japanese with consecutive interpretation by Prof. Yuka Sakamoto at Global Learning Center, and consisted of two parts. The first part was learning about the Tanabata festival and the meaning behind the seven paper ornaments. Then, the second part was for the participants to create their own Tanabata decorations for the festival. Overall, the participants have enjoyed the activities there and in the same time gained some background knowledges around the festival itself, as well as getting to know others.




ASK SENSEI


Prof. MAKIHARA Kanjuro

Interviewed by Sumaya and Sarika




 Can you please give us a brief introduction of yourself that includes your education and career history and your current department and lab at Tohoku University?


I received a bachelor's degree in Aeronautics and Astronautics from the University of Tokyo in 1998 and a Ph.D. degree from Graduate School, the University of Tokyo in 2004. I was an Aerospace Project Research Associate at JAXA/ISAS since 2004. After serving as a visiting researcher at University of Cambridge, U.K., I have been an associate professor at Tohoku University since 2011. I became a professor of Aerospace Engineering at Tohoku University in 2019. I am currently leading the Space Structures Laboratory (<http://web.tohoku.ac.jp/makihara/index.htm>).

 Would you mind sharing some of your current research topics and your interests with us?

My current research interests involve semi-active vibration suppression, self-powered energy-harvesting, dynamics of flexible structures, and space debris issues.

 Have you ever met a professor whose teaching style, attitude, behavior, and simply any specialty had changed your life and you concluded that you want to be a professor like this in the future?

My teaching style follows the way of my supervisor at my Ph.D. period. He is my favorite and most respected professor in my life.

 Is there an aspect of one of your students that is memorable for you?

I personally cannot select one student for me to mention, since I think that every students are wonderful in each of their own aspects.

ASK SENSEI #2

Prof. MAKIHARA Kanjuro



Based on your experience, what did you like about students from Tohoku University ?

I would think that students at Tohoku University are more diligent and determined compared to those I found in Tokyo University. Therefore, I would prefer teaching students at Tohoku more.



What is the thing in life that you would always refuse to do no matter what ?

If I were asked to sacrifice my family, then I would instantly refuse to do so. I would rather sacrifice something else other than my family.



If life gives you another chance to go back and start your studies all over again, what field/course would you want to study or explore? Why?

Even if someday I would have the chance to go back and change what I have studied in the past, I would not do so. Instead, I would choose the same course I have learned all over again to improve myself. I am satisfied with all my past choices and I would have the need to change it.



As the final question, on a scale of 10 how much would you score yourself as a professor if you are a student of Professor Makihara (your own) ?

I would rate myself an 8 out of 10.

Welcome to the Cafeteria!

Tohoku University students enjoy a multitude of life-supporting services across different university campuses, many of them run by the organization known as Tohoku University Co-operative, hereafter referred to as "COOP." COOP is an autonomous association that aims to provide commodities and student life services for its members. These services include COOP stores, service counters, travel services, and real estate agents. Despite the long list of services, the most arguably indispensable part of COOP's provided services are its restaurants and cafeterias. Amazingly, COOP is currently operating more than ten cafeterias inside the university - which is shocking even for us! In this article, we will introduce some of the cafeterias run by COOP, which will hopefully provide some insight regarding one of the most important places in the university.

Aoba Dining (East Aobayama)

www.tohoku.ac.jp/map/en/?f=AY_Z07

Aoba Dining is located in East Aobayama, near the School of Engineering. It is in a big hall on the first floor, with tables both inside and outside the building, allowing students to eat outside, enjoying the good vibes and fresh air.



Aobayama Co-op Restaurant (North Aobayama)

www.tohoku.ac.jp/map/en/?f=AY_Z14

Aobayama Co-op Restaurant is located in North Aobayama, in Kita-Aobayama Commons. In this restaurant, students and faculty members from various schools and faculties can enjoy eating inside the university.

Midori Dining (Aobayama)

www.tohoku.ac.jp/map/en/?f=AY_Z24

Midori Dining is located near the Faculty of Agriculture in Aobayama Campus. It is very close to University House Aobayama, where FGL students who just arrived in Japan live.



Keyaki Dining (Aobayama)

www.tohoku.ac.jp/map/en/?f=AY_E10

Keyaki Dining is a restaurant in Aobayama. It offers a different selection of menus compared to other places, and its atmosphere is more of a restaurant than a cafeteria, with tables both inside and outside. It is next to a convenience store, so it is quite convenient to eat here and buy some snacks in the store before heading back.

Kawauchi Co-op Restaurant (South Kawauchi)

www.tohoku.ac.jp/map/en/?f=KW_Z28

Kawauchi Co-op Restaurant is located in South Kawauchi, which is also where the Tohoku University Main Library is. Students in the Faculty of Arts and Letters usually visit this place to eat and chat.



Kawauchi no Mori Dining (Kawauchi)

www.tohoku.ac.jp/map/en/?f=KW_Z15

This is the main Kawauchi Cafeteria! This place is always crowded with students during lunchtime, and with its large dining space, has the capacity to accommodate a large number of students. It serves regular menus such as curry and set meals. In addition to that, it is right next to a co-op store where you can purchase drinks and snacks for your breaks, books for the classes, and souvenirs for your family and friends. You can also get services such as traveling, housing, driving license training packages, and many more from Kawauchi Welfare Facilities found in the same building.

Kitchen Terrace Couleur (Kawauchi)

www.tohoku.ac.jp/map/en/?f=KW_Z17

Located as a wing to Kawauchi no Mori Dining, Kitchen Terrace Couleur is an inseparable extension serving various noodles and various ever-changing meals that suit well with the weather. The variety ensures that you will never get bored of the food options. It comes with an outdoor dining lounge, which is perfect in every season (except Winter!).



Sakura Kitchen (Katahira)

www.tohoku.ac.jp/map/en/?f=KH_Z16

Sakura Kitchen is the main Cafeteria of the Katahira campus, located just outside the main gate and is beside the dormitory. Sakura Kitchen serves regular menus including curry, set meals, and noodles.



Restaurant Hagi (Katahira)

https://www.tohoku.ac.jp/map/en/?f=KH_Z17

For those who seek more fanciness, Restaurant Hagi sits on the second floor of Sakura Kitchen and serves a special dinner where you can enjoy the atmosphere decorated with luxurious vibes of the prestigious Tohoku University.



Seiryu Co-op Restaurant (Seiryu)

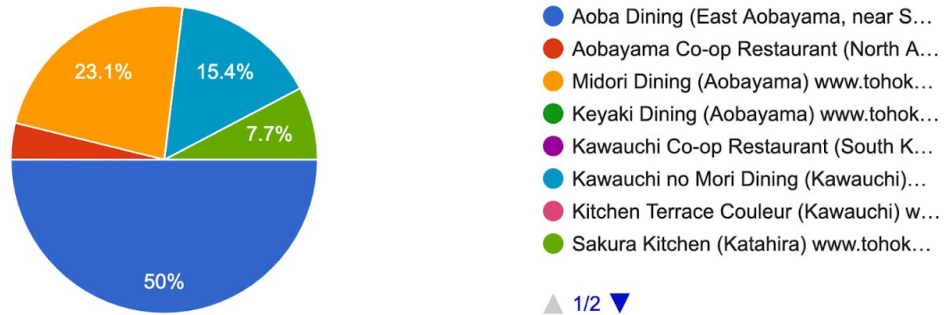
www.tohoku.ac.jp/map/en/?f=SR_Z10

Seiryu Co-op Restaurant is located in the heart of the Seiryu Campus, right in the middle of Tohoku University Hospital and the Seiryu campus. It is a large place that serves regular meals similar to the other major cafeterias, plus some special meals. It also has a coop store with similar services as those found in the Kawauchi Welfare Facilities.

In addition, before writing this article we conducted a survey via Google Form to ask students some questions about the cafeterias. The survey was sent out to FGL students via email and promoted on the posters attached around the cafeterias. Here, we would like to provide the survey results.

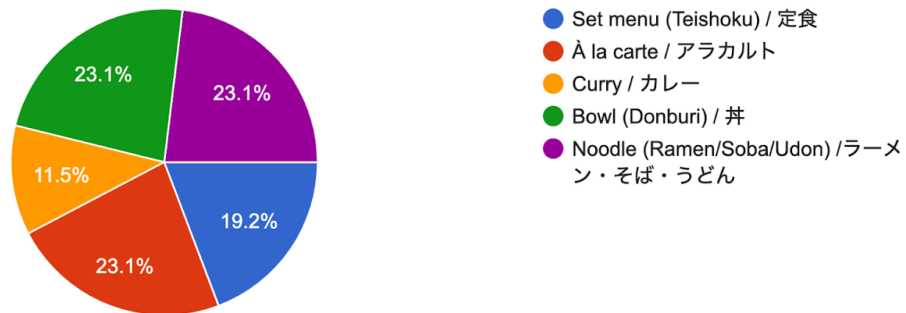
一番よく利用するカフェテリアは？ / Which cafeteria down below do you most frequently go?

26 responses



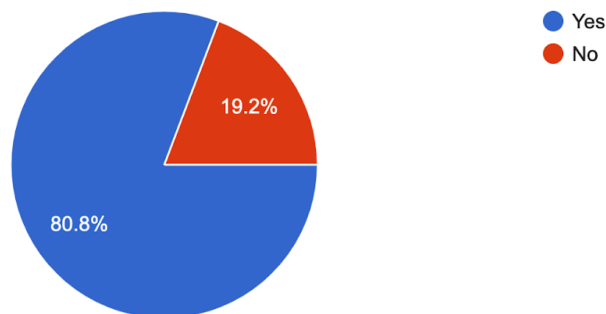
そのカフェテリアの中で、一番好きな食べ物のカテゴリは何ですか？ In that cafeteria, what food category do you like to eat most?

26 responses



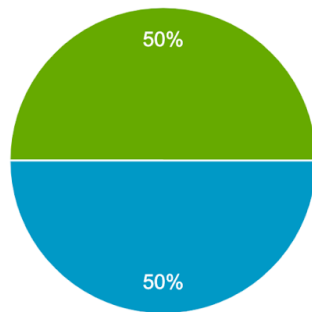
あなたの好きなカフェテリアは、上記と同じですか？ / Is your favorite cafeteria the same as above?

26 responses



上記の質問で「No」と答えた方は、下どのカフェテリアが好きですか？/If your answer is "No", which cafeteria down below is your favorite?

4 responses

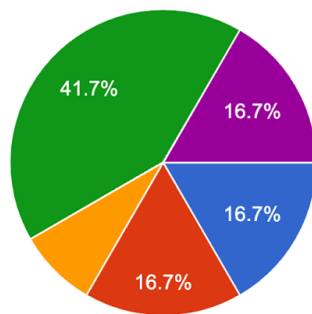


- Aoba Dining (East Aobayama, near S...)
- Aobayama Co-op Restaurant (North A...)
- Midori Dining (Aobayama) www.tohok...
- Keyaki Dining (Aobayama) www.tohok...
- Kawauchi Co-op Restaurant (South K...)
- Kawauchi no Mori Dining (Kawauchi)...
- Kitchen Terrace Couleur (Kawauchi) w...
- Sakura Kitchen (Katahira) www.tohok...

▲ 1/2 ▼

上記のカフェテリアの中で、一番好きな食べ物のカテゴリは何ですか？/ In that cafeteria, what food category do you like to eat most?

12 responses



- Set menu (Teishoku) / 定食
- À la carte / アラカルト
- Curry / カレー
- Bowl (Donburi) / 丼
- Noodle (Ramen/Soba/Udon) / ラーメン・そば・うどん

From the survey, it can be concluded that the cafeteria that the students frequently visit is mostly also their favorite one. Also, the most popular meal among the students is the rice bowl, likely due to its variety of ingredients that frequently change over the course of the school year.

Credits

Last but not least, we would like to give special thanks to Tonklar Khaimook (one of FGL Community leaders), Sera Koo, Sota Yoshimoto, Teacher Yumiko Watanabe, and University COOP, who contributed to organizing the survey with us. The survey would not have been successful without their help.

ASK SENPAI

Yuktesh Balaji (Yuki)

4th Year IMAC-U Student

Interviewed by TK

Transcribed by Shin



TK : Hey Senpai, I'm glad we're having this chat, can you please give me a brief introduction about your background?

Yuki : Hi, I'm Yuktesh Balaji, 4th year IMAC-U student at Tohoku University. I'm from Mysuru, a city located in the southern part of India. I'm currently doing research in the Molecular Robotics Lab run by prof. Satoshi Murata under Prof. Shogo Hamada. I'm working on semi automating the fabrication and assembly of artificial cell like structures (liposomes) using microfluidic devices to engineer them into micrometer sized molecular robots that can be programmed using DNA, proteins and other biomolecules.

TK : Ahh, that seems interesting, can you please explain the topic of molecular robotics in detail?

Yuki : Sure, our lab focuses on using biomaterials, which are basically like components that are bio-friendly and found in living organisms, stuff that make up cells, tissues etc. and engineer them for various applications.

One such application would be creating molecular robots for precision drug delivery. For example, many cancer treatments would probably use chemotherapy or a bunch of drugs that would potentially harm all healthy cells surrounding the tumor. However, with the advent of DNA nanotechnology and molecular robotics, you can program artificial cells to precisely deliver drugs to the cancerous cells while remaining completely neutral to healthy cells. Henceforth, providing a much safer and effective alternative to existing medical treatments.

Another example would be that of remote pathogen detection using DNA/RNA and microfluidic devices (micrometer sized devices that are used to conduct experiments) which can potentially detect any pathogen containing genetic material with high accuracy, shorter testing time and remotely thereby eliminating the need for PCR and other kinds of testing methods currently employed.

ASK SENPAI #2

Yuktesh Balaji (Yuki)

TK : Wow, your research area instills curiosity in me, what are your plans for academics in the future?

Yuki : I've always wanted to start a business, and believed that an engineering background would provide key analytical and technical skills that would be useful in a broad range of topics. Therefore, having received a strong foundation in Mechanical and Aerospace engineering I also gained some experience working on engineering biological systems during my research at the lab on molecular robotics and nanotechnology. Moving further, adding to my knowledge and experiences, I would like to pursue my interest in business and finance and hopefully utilize it for the greater good.

TK : I see, this may make a good example for people with similar ideologies/interests. So, next let's move on to life in Sendai. How was your past year in Sendai?

Yuki : I had left Sendai to spend my fall vacation in India after finishing my semester here in February 2020 just before the pandemic had started and I was only able to come back in October of 2021 due to the various border restrictions. However, last year, most of the classes were online, so you can pretty much say I graduated online. After coming here, I got a chance to visit my lab and start experiments for my graduation thesis. Because it was something completely new to me as it was different in comparison to what we usually study in the mechanical engineering courses. It is an interdisciplinary field with a combination of engineering, biology and chemistry!

TK : Can you tell me more about your hobbies or interests?

Yuki : Haha, my hobbies seem to be changing by the day. Back in school, I used to have lots of free time and I used to spend it learning to play the keyboard, violin and drums alongside sports like swimming and yoga. Nowadays, I spend most of my time watching content online, playing Esports and organizing club activities at the university. Honestly, I don't have enough free time to pursue a new hobby entirely due to the busy schedule.

ASK SENPAI #3

Yuktesh Balaji (Yuki)

TK : I see, that's great,! Moving on, you are currently living life in your 20s, any tips on how to enjoy ours better?

Yuki : I think there are lots of fun things to do in the city. I take a day off my schedule during the weekends and grab some dinner downtown with my friends and occasionally indulge in games and parties. Currently, Bowling and Billiards seem to be my top two favorite games and you should definitely try it out sometime.

P.S Mom if you're reading this, basically I eat, sleep, study, and then repeat (laughing)

TK : Haha, we'll make sure to "edit" this part out. Continuing the interview, how's the food in Japan? Do you have any restaurant recommendations?

Yuki : The food here is generally good, I'm a vegetarian and it goes without saying that there are only a limited number of options to choose from. Therefore, I usually prefer cooking in my dorm or grabbing a bite from the convenient store. Occasionally, I have dinner at Indian restaurants and would likely recommend the same if you like Indian food. Moreover, in the past few years, the number of Vegetarian/Vegan food options have been increasing in Sendai making it slightly more convenient for people with dietary restrictions to find many good restaurants downtown!

TK : I'll be sure to try out some Indian food next time! I'd like to circle back to academics. Can you give some tips for learning, getting good grades? while having fun in doing so?

Yuki : Based on my experience, a lot of students, including myself for the most part, usually only spend time studying for exams without truly understanding the topics of the subject in detail and as a result tend to forget what we've learned exponentially fast. I would strongly recommend students to study and understand the subject rather than focusing completely on grades. Ideally, they would be two sides of a coin of equal importance but personally, I'd prioritize the importance of understanding the fundamentals of a subject as the latter is only a by-product if done properly. Don't stress about topics that make you feel uncomfortable and take your time studying from the basics. Group studies in my opinion are a fun way to learn new or complex topics!

TK : Lastly, what would your advice be to our current students?

Yuki : Summarizing my experiences, I'd firmly encourage students to try as many new things as possible both academically and recreationally. Make sure your foundations in the area of study are strong, but at the same time, don't limit yourself to a single area of interest as it will let you broaden your options while helping you realize where your true passion lies.

Take me as an example, my coursework focuses on mechanical and aerospace engineering, however, I am specializing in molecular robotics (bioengineering) and am looking forward to pursuing a career in business and finance.

Lastly, and I can't stress this harder, improve your soft skills and network with people. This will aid you in maintaining good relationships and will greatly assist you in building your personality.

What to do during **SUMMER** in Sendai ?

written by Wei-Wei and Carlos

Summer in Tohoku - Flower viewing and Festival

The temperature has gradually increased; the color of leaves has also started to become emerald. With the fading of Godetia pink, the summer of Tohoku is coming.

It is a widely known truth that Tohoku is an area for people to enjoy nature. Usually, when speaking of summer, the first image that comes to our minds must be green leaves. However, the essence of summer is much more than that. In this article, we are going to introduce some beautiful places for flower viewing in the Tohoku region.

In August, there are several kinds of flowers recommended for viewing. First, 輪王寺 (りんのうじ), a temple located in the Kitayama area of Sendai, owns a large pool inside their garden. The famous flower in this garden is the water lily or 睡蓮 (すいれん) in Japanese. The water lily symbolizes a new spirit, new wish, delight, and new life. Some of the students are going to face their first summer vacation in Japan, so viewing the water lily might be a good option for you to celebrate your new lives in Sendai!



Water lily in 輪王寺

Next, similar to the water lily, this is also a great season for viewing the lotus flower. The lotus flower is called 蓮 (はす) in Japanese and it commonly serves as a sacred symbol for purity, rebirth, and strength. The difference between the lotus and the water lily is that the former blooms at a certain distance from the surface of the water, while the latter blooms directly on the surface of the water. The recommended place in Miyagi is 伊豆沼 (いずぬま) located on the north side of Sendai. You can go to this place by taking JR-EAST Tohoku Main Line to the 新田 (にした) station. Besides this place, if you have time to visit Akita prefecture before August 31st, there is a festival called 千秋蓮祭り (せんしゅうはすまつり) since July 22nd. The location of this festival is 5 minutes walking from JR-EAST Akita station. Don't miss out!



Lotus flower of 千秋蓮祭り (Resource: <https://sensyuhasumatsuri.jp/>)



Lotus flower of 伊豆沼 (Resource: https://www.tohokukanko.jp/festivals/detail_10008.html)

Red Shiso Leaf – Combating the Summer Heat



Red shiso leaf. It is a very cheap and flavorful traditional Japanese ingredient. This much was around 150 yen only.

Do you need something to beat the summer heat? Do you want to feel like you are sunbathing on Hawaii beach with a glass of bloody mary, but you have no money? Well, you came to the right place. Let me introduce you to the traditional Japanese summer heat repellent, the red shiso leaf.

The shiso leaf is native to Japan and it has a very unique taste. The aroma of it is minty, a little bit licorice-y, and fresh at the same time. Perfect for summer! There are two types of shiso leaf, green and red. The green one is very popular in sushi and tempura, and is also known to

be used in the Japanese mojito in the cocktail world, as a replacement of mint in the classic mojito. The red one is lesser-known outside of Japan. It is mostly used for red shiso juice and the coloring of umeboshi.

This time, I would like to share a recipe for Red Shiso Juice, courtesy of a blog called chopstick chronicles.

You will need:

- 500 g of red shiso leaf
- 2 cups of water
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of apple cider vinegar

Red Shiso Leaf – Combating the Summer Heat

Instruction:

1. Add the washed shiso leaf to boiling water under medium heat until the leaf changes to a greenish color (approximately 1 minute).
2. Take out all the leaves and extract as much red liquid as possible.
3. Bring the liquid to a simmer, then add sugar and apple cider vinegar.
4. Cool it down and store it in a clean bottle for up to 3 months.



Red shiso leaf juice. Courtesy of <https://www.chopstickchronicles.com/shiso-juice/>

How to use:

- Shiso soda: Combine sparkling water, red shiso juice, honey, and ice.
- Shiso slushy: Semi freeze the shiso soda to make a sorbet or popsicle.
- Milky shiso: combine red shiso juice, yogurt, honey, and lemon juice.
- Cocktail: Red shiso screwdriver (Red shiso juice, vodka, orange juice), red shiso gin and tonic (Red shiso juice, gin, tonic water, lime), etc.

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Mascot design by Sera Koo