

Double Degree at Tohoku University

Student life

The academic environment of Tohoku University, as a graduate student, is almost entirely dedicated towards the fullest experience of the research and laboratory activities. Classes are comparatively few during the two years of the program. Hence, the time dedicated to research and laboratory is substantial and dedicated to the achievement of some research results.

Of course, each laboratory is different, with its own set of rules and practices. As such experience can significantly vary between two students, and encountered pressure can be as variable.

One of the findings of those two years as a double degree student is that the different entities of the university are relatively independent of one another. As a consequence communication in between can be difficult. I think student's lives could be slightly easier if each laboratory and department had a good knowledge of the existence of the Double Degree program.

Living in Sendai: Experience and Advice

Sendai is a lovely city very enjoyable on a daily basis. It is great enough to find almost everything you would like or need, and small enough to be highly livable and avoid stresses and pressures that are inherent to bigger cities like Tokyo or Osaka.

Its localization between Ocean and mountains makes it the ideal base for exploration of the wonderful region of Tohoku. I greatly encourage anyone to spend some exploring and travelling in Miyagi, Yamagata, Iwate, Fukushima, and so on.

Compared to European standards, and given the current weakness of the yen, living in Sendai is affordable. There are several university dormitories and the monthly total expenditures including utilities would not go beyond 45 thousands yen. Food can also be cheap, such it seems realistic to spend less than 7 thousands yen on food per week. The only costly service in Sendai would be transportation. A typical subway ride costs around 230 yen and it can quite rapidly add up!

The supermarket Aeon is the perfect place to do the first essential shopping when moving in the city as it combines food and daily supplies and everything you could need to start a decent living in a new country.



Figure 1 - The beautiful bay of Mastushima.



Figure 2 - The great falls of Akiu.

Career Paths

The career paths after the double degree are many! Of course, one could continue in Ph.D. in the same laboratory as the degree, to deepen research work, or explore new topics. A Ph.D. in another institution is also a very good option as Tohoku University is internationally recognized and prized for its high standards. It is thus easy to go to another university using this argument.

One could also pursue a professional career outside academia and look for a job in Japan or elsewhere. To be noted that job hunting in Japan is very codified and not adapted to non-Japanese people for language and cultural reasons. It is however not impossible.