

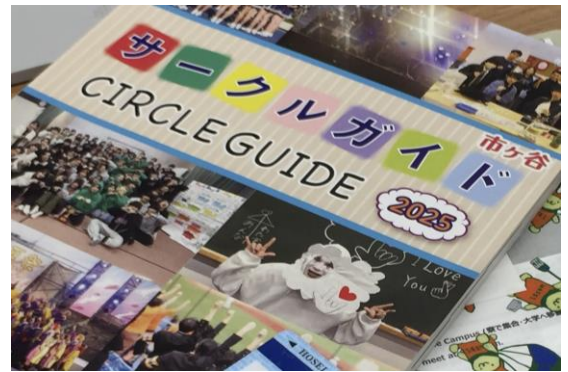
Konkuk and Hosei

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It has been two months since I became an ESOP student at Hosei University, and despite being surrounded by students of a similar age, I find daily surprises in how different campus life in Japan is compared to Korea. As a Korean ESOP student, I would like to reflect on some of the key differences I have experienced between university life in Korea and Japan.

Unique ‘Bukatsu’ and Passion of Japanese Students

One major difference is how seriously Japanese students engage in **club activities**. Every thursday during lunch time, Hosei University’s cheerleading squad performs near the main gate, and seeing them for the first time was a refreshing shock. Each member was completely focused on their role, and their commitment left a strong impression on me.



The **sheer number and variety of clubs** are also much broader than what I’ve seen in Korea. For example, clubs like “We Love Pokémon” or “Japanese Idol Club” don’t typically exist in Korean universities, which made me curious about the kinds of activities they do. Japanese students seem to **openly express their individuality and enthusiastically participate in clubs** with others who share their interests. Unlike Japanese universities where student-led hobby clubs are very active, Korean universities tend to have fewer clubs overall, and most are academic or career-focused. One of the biggest differences I noticed after coming to Hosei University is **the club culture in Japan**, where students can **wholeheartedly pursue their personal interests**.



A Valuable Cultural Experience

I’ve also noticed some **smaller lifestyle differences**. For instance, I was surprised to see **all freshmen wearing formal suits** during the entrance ceremony. In Korea, university entrance ceremonies are more casual and attendance is usually optional. But during entrance season at Hosei, it’s common to see new students in suits taking photos in front of the school gate.

Another difference is **the class schedule**. In Korean universities, class lengths vary from 90 minutes to 3 hours, and there’s no designated lunchtime. However, at Hosei, every class is 100 minutes long, and there is a fixed lunch break. I found this structure unique, although it does mean that convenience stores like 7-Eleven and the campus cafeteria get very crowded, so I have to rush to get lunch. In Korea, I sometimes skipped lunch due to back-to-back classes, but in Japan, I’ve been able to eat lunch regularly every day.

Experiencing these differences firsthand has been a valuable part of my time studying abroad. Each cultural difference feels new and interesting, and I’m looking forward to making the most of my remaining time enjoying university life in Japan.