

the **epic** ADVANTAGE

Student / Faculty Collaborative Research Experience

Building STEAM in Japan: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Japanese Arts & Environment

Dates: May 18-June 9, 2020

Credits: Choice of 0 or 3

Leaders: Judy Wojcik and Yasumi Kuriya

Application Deadline: November 1, 2019

Apply in Handshake



Description of Experience and Research:

Ceramics and Japanese Studies unite to create a 3-week EPIC Advantage research experience traveling and visiting eight historic kiln sites throughout Japan. The study of Japanese pottery involves histories of Japanese arts, politics, food culture, geology and relationships to its neighboring countries. Currently changes in material culture, tourism, geologic and environmental concerns are influencing Japan's ceramic practices. We will identify research topics in a 1-hour credit orientation seminar spring semester that will then be fully developed by our immersion into Japanese Culture. Keeping Earlham's mission in mind, this program will offer Earlham students opportunities to research and identify personal or global challenges and to integrate their academic interests in the production of a final classroom presentation at Waseda University. Upon return, the group will have a comprehensive presentation of learning to the Earlham community and participation in the Fall Epic Expo 2020.

Career Focus:

This program is suitable for students who are seeking a career in Anthropology, Art History, Business/Tourism, Ceramics, Environmental Studies, Geology and Japanese Studies.

Location and Living Arrangements:

The research will take place throughout Japan. We will be traveling to pottery sites on the main island and Kyushu island. The eight pottery sites include, Kasama, Mashiko, Tajimi, Shigaraki, Kurashiki, Imari, Karatsu and Arita in order. Living arrangements will change as we travel from region to region and include youth hostels, hotels and traditional ryokans. We will arrive and depart from Tokyo. We will be traveling mainly by train (JR Pass) with occasional bus and cab trips.

Expectations for Students:

The learning goals for this program are:

- To reflect upon material culture and society utilizing daily journal entries.
- To gain interpersonal competencies including social skills, cultural competence, teamwork, oral communication
- To gain intrapersonal competencies including ethical responsibility to self and others, reliability and

dependability, resilience, adaptability, and capacity for improvement.

- To identify modern and traditional approaches to pottery marketing and survival
- To experience how geography impacts the kind of material each site utilizes, and how the local material impacts the aesthetics, forms, surfaces and functions of pottery produced (historic and current)
- To observe whether the traditional historic style of ceramics in each region is maintained
- To identify historical influences from neighboring countries (Korea, China, and Iran) on the materials used, forms created and glazes/imagery used
- To create a final research project/presentation

Faculty:

Judy Wojcik teaches Ceramics encompassing hand building, wheel throwing, clay and glaze testing and kiln firing. She serves on the Board of Trustees at the Richmond Art Museum (2013-current). In 2018, she collaborated with Earlham Alumna, Rachel Meginnes, CGE, and Nancy Taylor to develop an Off-Campus Semester Study at Penland School of Craft in North Carolina. Fall 2016 (sabbatical), she did an 8-week residency at Penland School of Craft. Summer 2016 she traveled to northern Japan with 4 EC Faculty Rediscovering Japan Through Tohoku Festivals. In Spring 2015 she led a Ford/Knight Student-Faculty Collaborative Research class called *Sustainable Ceramics: Identifying, Defining, and Addressing Sustainability Issues in Ceramics*. Her first trip to Japan was in 1997 when she and partner Kenton Hall had a 5-week artist residency in Takihata, south of Osaka.

Yasumi Kuriya teaches Japanese language, linguistics, and foreign language pedagogy. Her current interest is in the revitalization of the Ainu language and culture. She spent the spring (sabbatical) and summer of 2013 studying the Ainu and the Maori in New Zealand. She has led a number of off-campus programs such as SICE (2009 and 2015), Japan May Terms (2010 and 2015), and an EPIC Advantage Student/Faculty Collaborative Research Project (summer 2018). She also led a Ford/Knight project on Food Culture in Japan in 2015.

Preparation:

Students will be required to take a 1 credit EPIC Advantage Orientation seminar during the spring semester. This seminar will provide the necessary background and travel logistics for students to maximize the experience. Class meeting dates/times will be determined in the future.

Prerequisites:

Preference given to rising juniors, seniors and students who have studied Japanese and/or other disciplines mentioned in the career focus section. Rising sophomores and May graduates are eligible to apply.

Cost to Student:

This experience is funded as an Epic Advantage opportunity. Funding includes, travel, room and board and additional expenses as required by the program. This funding does not include the cost of passports and immunizations or other personal expenses. The CDC recommends (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine before travel.

Program plans subject to change.

Program Policies: <https://earlham.edu/academics/off-campus-study/program-policies/>

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