The 37th Gifu University Summer School Program (2026) Activity Report [from June 17 to July 15]

GU hosted the Summer School 2026, welcoming a total of 8 students from 3 of its partner universities overseas: 5 from Northern Kentucky University (USA), 2 from the University of South Florida (USA), and1 from Srinakharinwirot University (Thailand).

June 17: Opening Ceremony, Campus Tour & Luncheon Meeting

Following the opening ceremony, the students took part in an orientation session, a campus tour, and a luncheon meeting. At the luncheon, resident assistants—who live and share daily life with the international students during the summer school—and student supporters—who are paired with the summer school participants for various exchange activities—also joined. Although many students initially appeared tense, they gradually relaxed as time passed and began to build friendly connections with one another.





June 18: Excursion to INUYAMA: Castle and KARAKURI Museum

For the first excursion, the students visited Inuyama. The weather was good, allowing the students to explore the site in small groups. As they made their way up to the mountain, the students observed historical buildings and exhibits and enjoyed a panoramic view of the castle town. At the Karakuri museum, the students were deeply engaged as they watched the mechanisms of the traditional *karakuri* dolls. They responded to the guide's thorough explanations with great enthusiasm. After the tour, they also enjoyed shopping and strolling through the castle town.





June 24: Student Exchange Activities

As part of the student exchange activities, the participants and student volunteers formed groups and carried out an exploration of Gifu City based on themes chosen by each group. After sharing their initial impression of Gifu City, they discussed the details of their planned visit and deepened their understanding of the city.




June 28: Excursion to Seki City: Edged Tool Workshop

The students visited the Seki Hamono Museum. During the iaido demonstaration by the museum director, the students were astonished to see a bamboo stalk split in an instant. Inside the museum, they received an explanation of sword-making techniques and also took part in a blacksmithing workshop. Afterwards, they dressed in *uchikake* robes and *jinbaori* coats for commemorative photos.





July 1: Tanabata Event

In honor of the Japanese Tanabata tradition, the students wrote their wishes on colorful strips of paper. The tanzaku hung on the bamboo branches reflected a wide range of hopes—from prayers for their families' health to aspirations for their future careers. As they gathered around the completed bamboo decoration, the participants deepened their interactions.




July 3-6: Gujo Program

With the cooperation of the Gujo Hachiman International Friendship Association, the students took part in cultural exchange activities and a homestay program in Gujo. At the Kawaai Elementary School, they observed classes, experienced a Japanese school lunch, and danced the traditional Gujo Odori together with the pupils. At the Gujo High School, they practiced kendo under the guidance of the school's kendo club members. They also participated in workshop on shodo (calligraphy) and sado (tea ceremony). Each student was warmly welcomed into their host family's home, where they spent four days and three nights. The time they shared with their host families offered a valuable and meaningful opportunity to experience life in a Japanese household.









July 8: Nohgaku (Noh & Kyogen) Workshop

A workshop on Noh and Kyogen was held for the participants. The session featured lectures and demonstrations by Noh performers Madoka Mikita and Hiromichi Tamoi of the Kanze school, and Kyogen performers Chuzaburo Shigeyama and Koudo Yamaguchi of the Okura school. By watching, listening, and experiencing these traditional performing arts, the students were able to appreciate their profound depth and further deepen their interest in Japanese culture.



July 10: Excursion to Mino City: MINO-WASHI Museum

The students visited the MINO-WASHI Museum, where they learned about *Mino-gami*, a type of handmade Japanese paper that has been produced in Mino City for centuries. Using the same authentic tools employed by master craftsmen and working with 100% kōzo (paper mulberry) fibers, the students tried their hand at traditional papermaking. After the workshop, they toured the exhibition room, where clear and engaging audiovisual displays explained the history of Mino washi, its production processes, and the tools involved.







July 15: Program Results Presentation

As the culmination of the summer school program, a presentation session was held on the four themes assigned for the student exchange activities: “Historical site of Gifu,” “Traditional crafts of Gifu,” “River culture of Gifu,” and “Food culture of Gifu.” Under the guidance of the student supporters, each participant delivered an individual presentation on Gifu, showcasing the achievement of their Japanese language studies.







July 15: Speech, Closing Ceremony & Farewell Party

On the final day, a closing ceremony and farewell party were held. The international students delivered speeches—using the Japanese they fad refined during the classes from June 18 to July 15—sharing memorable experiences and moments they enjoyed throughout the program. They were also presented completion certificates.





