



Student Orientation Guide

01.09.2018

Update booking system for cars and alternative sim card for unlocked phones Produced by the OIST Student Assembly

Overview

This guide has been created to aid all incoming students, be they interns or graduate students, with adjusting to life in Okinawa and OIST itself. It has been assembled from the collective experience of the students who have come before, and will evolve in time as situations change.

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Life in Japan

Banking

Opening A Bank Account

On orientation, OIST will give you two options of banks: Bank of Ryukyus and Okinawa Bank.

On opening your bank account you can apply for a Debit Card at both banks. This card can be used for the ATM as well as online purchases and anywhere that accepts VISA or JCB. The card will be delivered in 2-3 weeks.

[Banking Services](#)

Mobile Phones

Budget Carrier plans

Mineo (www.mineo.jp)

This budget carrier offers SIM only plans, however, they require an NTT-Docomo or KDDI AU network compatible phone. Phones can also be purchased through Mineo. A 3GB data only plan runs 900yen/month. 3GB plus regular phone function is 1510yen/month. Data only users can take advantage of a VoIP app called LaLaCall to make domestic calls. If you opt to go without SMS functionality (approx. 100yen/month), you will have difficulty registering for certain apps (like the popular messaging app LINE) and websites that require you to receive a verification code by SMS text. There is no English support, although the Resource Center may be able to help you out. There are no brick and mortar stores, but there are a few designated shops that can help you out with setting up your phone, troubleshooting, etc.

Rakuten (<https://mobile.rakuten.co.jp/fee/ala carte/>)

Unlike Mineo above, Rakuten only offers SIM plans for the NTT-Docomo network, however they do sell phones as well. A 3GB data only plan runs 900yen/month. 3GB plus regular phone function is 1600yen/month. However instructions are given in English and the card will work throughout Japan. Please see the Resource Center for more information.

Unlocked Phones

Japan uses a different set of radio frequencies for their mobile phones from the rest of the world, however it is still possible to use unlocked phones from overseas within Japan. The following table lists the frequencies Japan uses for each band. Compare this list to your phone using the website <http://www.gsmarena.com/> to determine if your phone is compatible with Japan's networks.

Carrier Name	3G W-CDMA/UMTS	4G LTE
NTT Docomo	Major Cities:2100MHz (Band 1) Rural Area:800MHz (Band 19 or 6) Limited Area:1800MHz (Band 9)	2100MHz Band 1 1800MHz(1.7GHz) Band 3 800MHz Band 19 1500MHz Band 21
Softbank	2100MHz (Band 1) 900MHz (Band 8) 1500MHz (Band 11)	2100MHz Band 1 1800MHz (1.7GHz) Band 3 900MHz Band 8
KDDI au	CDMA2000 800MHz CDMA2000 2100MHz	2100MHz Band 1 1500MHz Band 11 800MHz Band 18

Language

It can be intimidating walking around the village or heading to the grocery store and hardly being able to read a thing. OIST offers free Japanese language classes which will help you get started. But at the same time, you are here for a PhD program, so who has time to study a new language?! For those wanting to get the biggest bang for your study time, mastering the katakana script is one of the most useful things you can do. This script is used to write loanwords adopted from other languages (99% of the time this language is English). After some practice with sounding out English words in the katakana syllables (or mora, for you linguists), you will find yourself able to read a surprising amount of signs and labels.

Life in Okinawa

General Information

[Student's Guide to Living in Okinawa](#)

List of items within:

1. Everyday shopping store guide
2. Used Item Shops
3. Cell phone plans
4. Drivers license
5. Online payments
6. Buying a car
7. Filling gasoline
8. Cheap flights
9. Bus service in Okinawa
10. Reserve a table at Hamazushi

- 11. Translation: Washing machine
- 12. Translation: Dishwasher
- 13. Translation: Oven and stove

Emergencies

[Emergency Guidelines](#)

When in doubt, you may call the OIST 24 hour Emergency Hotline: 098-966-8989.

They will redirect you to either the Health Center or Student Support, depending on the situation.

Typhoons

Typhoons are a real danger in Okinawa, with storms passing over the island between the months of July and November. However, for the most part they are not things to be afraid of, so long as you are prepared and stay indoors. All the facilities at OIST (including the village) are built to withstand typhoons, and with redundant power lines as well, there is little risk of losing power during the storm. However, it is still a good idea to stockpile food and water just in case, especially food that only requires a gas stove to cook. HR will announce when it is too dangerous to come to work, so please keep posted for those emails and stay indoors whenever you feel concerned about going outside.

Two useful links for tracking current storms on the ocean:

Japanese Meteorology Agency Typhoon Tracking: <http://www.jma.go.jp/en/typh/>

US Military Typhoon Tracking: <http://www.usno.navy.mil/ITWC/>

Health

General Information from OIST

[Resource Center on health](#)

[Locations and Hours of local Medical Institutions](#)

[Advice for new students](#)

Onna Clinic

Onna Clinic is currently the closest medical clinic for OIST personnel, open from Monday to Saturday from 9am to 12:30pm, and Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday from 2:00 pm to 5:30 pm. Although the clinic opens at 9am, the doors and queue begins at 8am, so it is recommended to arrive as early as possible and take a number to avoid being behind in the queue. There is one English speaking nurse, and the main doctor Dr. Norimitsu Tamaki speaks English as well. There is a pharmacy attached to the clinic so any prescriptions given by the clinic can be picked up from there.

Getting Around

Driving

[Getting your Driving License](#)

Check if there are requirements for full conversion of a license in your home country! Some countries have agreements with Japan that allow you to exchange your licence "as is", or only require you to take the driving exam.

Driving School

Unless you speak Japanese, this is the only school that is available to you. They have the option to do either the manual (roughly 325000¥) or automatic (285000¥ roughly) license. The course is then broken down into two parts, the permit part (which is done inside of the school) and then the full license (which is a combination of inside and outside). All written tests are taken in English and the test never changes if taken in English. You can find many people who will tell you some of the questions.

Yagi Seiken speaks fluent English however all the other teachers don't. Having a little bit of Japanese can help you however they do everything in their ability to assist you in teaching you how to drive. There will be a CPR course where you will have to follow along in Japanese but using Google Translate can help a lot.

1. Agena driving school: (Sahar)

Email: SEIKEN YAGI agena-ds@gamma.ocn.ne.jp

Address: Agena DS Oota 30 Uruma City Okinawa

Tel: 0120-92-8186

Driving Safety

Buying a Car

Cited from [Student's Guide to Living in Okinawa](#) In OIST you will like to have a car. Here are some tips/suggestions for you to choose and buy a car.

1. In Japan there are three types of cars: normal car (white plate), K-car (yellow plate), and electric car. K-car is specified for its smaller size (<3.4m (L) x 1.48m (W) x 2m (H)) and smaller engine displacement(<660cc)
2. The annual tax for K-cars is cheaper than normal white plate cars, so better consider this if your prior concern is saving money.
3. Buying a new car is not suggested due to the price, and usually second-hand cars are able to sustain for several years (depends on the age of the car).
4. You can find a lot of places selling used cars along road 58 around Kadena, Chatan, and Ginowan. They will stick the price on the car so you can easily recognize. You can also ask friends who have car for some recommendations.
 1. Goo-net Exchange is a good way to search local dealerships online, but you will need to use the [Japanese site](#) (and some auto-translate) to sort entries by Okinawa.

5. Most of the second-hand car dealers provide a 2-year car inspection (shaken, 車検) when you buy it. That means you don't have to do any "official" inspection in this period. However, it is still recommended to do regular check-up every half year. Once the official car inspection expires, you have to go to a government-certified garage or car repair center for a complete inspection. The price of it depends on the size, weight, and age of your car.
6. When you are considering buying a car, there is something you need to check:
 1. How old is the car (older cars are cheaper but better not choose a car older than 12 years old because you may want to use it for 5 years).
 2. What is the mileage of the car (in average 10 years-old second-hand cars have mileages around 80,000 km).
 3. Does the dealer provide warrant and how long it is (strongly suggest asking for a warrant longer than 6 months).
 4. Check the inner and outer appearances of the car and the engine as well. Ask the dealer for fixing/changing all the parts you feel not safe (Okinawa is an island so you should be aware of the rust, especially on the engine part).
 5. Ask for try-out to check the accelerator and the brake systems (e.g. How sensitive they are). You can also check the sound of the engine (whirring smoothly or not).
7. Usually car dealers don't provide car insurance, but you can ask if they know any agent that might be cheaper (they usually have some known agents). Otherwise, when you get the car you can ask the Resource Center for some helps in contacting car insurance agents. The insurance prices vary according to the plans and the age of the driver(s).
8. For buying the car, you need the certification of residence (住民票), which is the green sheet you got from the Onna-son village office. And you will have to pay some deposit beforehand.
9. It might take a week or more for the dealer to repair your car and prepare all the necessary documents.
10. Okinawa is very hot and humid, especially in summer time. If you don't use your car very often, make sure you keep the inside of the car dry (by putting some moisture-absorbers). Otherwise you might sadly find your car riddled with mold.

Renewing Your License

Renew your driver's license before the expiration date on the license

Time: Mon-Fri, 13:00 (lecture starts from 14:00)

Location: Hokubu Anzen Unten Gakkou

Address: 5-20-5 Agarie, Nago-city (〒905-0021 沖縄県名護市東江 5 - 2 0 - 5)

Map: <https://goo.gl/maps/P8frq2Cjls>

What to bring:

- Residence card or passport
- 5,300 yen
- Notification card (you receive the post card via mail)

Public Transportation

[Buses and Taxis](#)

Public transportation is a bit scarce compared to other parts of Okinawa, but you can still look up bus routes and schedules to plan your trip here: http://www.routefinder-okinawa.com/route_search?Lang=en

Taxis can be expensive but the Resource Center has a few taxi contacts that will take you from/to the airport for a fixed price (7000yen + expressway fee).

Low Cost Carriers

Cited from [Student's Guide to Living in Okinawa](#)

If you want to travel to mainland Japan, Taiwan, Korea, or somewhere not too far from Okinawa, here are some websites you can use for checking the flight and price. However, you must have credit card for the payment.

1. HelloWings: <http://en.hellowings.com> Advantages: The trend of price (tax included) for the whole year (recommended).
2. Skyscanner: <https://www.skyscanner.jp> Advantages: Including traditional flights.

(ps1. If you want to change the language and currency, just click the button on the top-right and select the language and currency you like.)

(ps2. The price trend is temporal and may change if the airline any promotion.)

(ps3. Some cheap flights from Naha airport take off from the LCC terminal. Check your itinerary before your flight, If it is at LCC terminal, take the shuttle bus (labeled with LCC) in front of the arrival gates of domestic terminal to the LCC terminal.)

Some low-cost airlines:

- Skymark (mainland; accepts payment in convenience stores) <http://www.skymark.co.jp/en/>
- Jetstar (Asia and more) <http://www.jetstar.com/jp/en/home>
- Vanilla (mainland, Taiwan, rest of Asia with layover) <https://www.vanilla-air.com/en/>
- Peach (mainland, Taiwan, Seoul, Thailand) <http://www.flypeach.com/pc/en>
- TigerAir (Taiwan) <http://www.tigerairtw.com/en/>
- DragonAir (Hong Kong) https://www.cathaypacific.com/cx/en_US/cathaydragon/introduction.html
- T'way (Korea) <https://www.twayair.com/main.do?langCode=EN>

Ferries

One of the fun parts of living in Okinawa is exploring all the nearby islands. Some islands are accessible by car, but many will require a ferry ride. There are multiple ports which can take you to a wide variety of more secluded islands, for when you need a break from the hustle and bustle of PhD life.

Tomari Port (in Northern Naha)

From here you can set off to the Kerama islands, which are known for their stunning blue water and excellent snorkeling and diving spots.

Zamami and Aka Island Ferry Schedule:

<http://www.zamamienglishguide.com/ferries>

Tokashiki Island Ferry Schedule:

<https://www.oki-islandguide.com/getting-here-and-around/from-tomari-port-naha-city-to-tokashiki-port>

Unten Port (near Nakijin)

Ferry to Izena Island:

<https://www.oki-islandguide.com/getting-here-and-around/from-untan-port-nakijin-village-to-izena-port>

Ferry to Iheya Island:

<https://www.oki-islandguide.com/getting-here-and-around/from-untan-port-nakijin-village-to-iheya-port>

Motobu Port

Boats running to Ie Island depart from Motobu Port. Ie island is a small, quiet, bikeable island. The annual lily festival occurs in late april/early May. It generally runs for about two weeks, one of which is the Golden Week holiday. Go the other week to avoid crowds.

Ferry to Ie Island:

<https://www.oki-islandguide.com/getting-here-and-around/from-motobu-port-motobu-town-to-ie-port>

Other ferry routes

This site has a nice list of ferry routes, including routes that run in the Miyako and Yaeyama island chains.

http://www.kotsu-okinawa.org/en/index_ferry.html

Furniture

Furniture shopping can be a tricky topic to traverse here at OIST: On the one hand, if you have an unfurnished apartment, you don't want to be sleeping on the floor or a lumpy mattress for the next five years, justifying some spending on decent furniture. On the other hand, selling, pawning, or even disposing of furniture can be a time-consuming and costly endeavor here in Okinawa. Although the graduate school provides a moving allowance that allows you to bring things over, they don't provide such an allowance to move things wherever you plan on going to after your PhD here is done, meaning that it might be a smart idea to carefully consider what to bring over and what to buy while here.

A healthy rule of thumb is to buy pieces of furniture here secondhand whenever possible, so long as you can confirm its cleanliness. Another good tip is to buy modular furniture, that can be easily disassembled and reconfigured as needed. A number of resources for buying furniture here in Okinawa are listed below:

Bookoo

Bookoo is to Okinawa what Craigslist is to major cities in the US and elsewhere in the world: an English-speaking classifieds directory where people can buy, sell and barter furniture as needed. Many of the buyers and sellers of furniture on Bookoo are US servicemen and women (and their families) whose deployments are ending soon and need to get rid of any unnecessary belongings as soon as possible. There are some great bargains to be had on Bookoo if you wait long enough and have a knack for haggling. There are a number of disadvantages to buying furniture this way however: First, many of the sellers live on base, meaning you'd need to get on base yourself to inspect furniture before you buy. Second, many sellers leave soon after they may sell you a piece of furniture, leaving you to deal with any complications of a deal gone sour. Finally, it's more likely than not that you'll have to go pick up the furniture yourself, meaning that you'll

need to have a car (and depending on the size of the furniture, a few helping hands) to move whatever you buy over to your apartment. Be cautious and exercise common sense when buying furniture (or anything else for that matter) from Bookoo.

Nitori

As one student put it: "Nitori is basically Japanese Ikea." Brand-new, functional and modular furniture is sold at Nitori for reasonable prices. They also have online shopping, a rarity for Okinawan furniture stores, and a number of delivery options including overnight (sometimes same-day) delivery. The closest Nitori to OIST is down on route 58 immediately before Chatan.

Tida

Tida is OIST's own internal bulletin board system. As a new student, make a habit of checking the Tida marketplace in the mornings before heading out. OIST is an international institution where post-docs, interns, and students are constantly coming and going, leaving things behind. Unlike Bookoo, where the sellers' reputations might be less than savory, Tida (for the most part) operates on an honor system where all flaws with products for sale are shown upfront. Buying from Tida is a great way to keep OIST sustainable and save cash on furniture. Best of all, many of the listings are right here on campus, meaning a visit to check out the furniture in question is a brisk walk away.

Makeman

Feeling craftsy? Makeman is your go-to DIY supplies store in Okinawa. Paint, nails, lumber and tools are all available at this one-stop emporium for the aspiring craftsman. Makeman also has a number of ready-made furniture options that can be assembled, much like Nitori. The best part is that, here at OIST, we have our own carpentry workshop- where aspiring carpenters can assemble or repair their own pieces of furniture and make friends in the process!

Shopping

[List of places to shop](#)

Food

Dietary Restrictions

Unlike many other countries, Japan does not specially label their ingredient lists with common allergens. As such it will be on you to learn the kanji for allergens or other food restrictions you need to avoid. Using the Google Translate app to scan each list can be helpful, but here are some common ones:

Wheat	麦 *
Egg	卵 (たまご)
Dashi (meat stock)	だし or 出汁
Peanut	落花生 or ピーナッツ
Pork	豚肉
Beef	牛肉

- This is the generic kanji. It also appears in the names of other members of the wheat family: wheat (小麦), rye (ライ麦), barley (大麦)... but also oats (燕麦).

In addition, the bulk food store Gyomu Super labels which meats are halal, as they are sourced from Malaysia usually. Vegetarians can find useful info on vegetarian shops and restaurants through the website [Happy Cow](#).

Online Specialty Food Vendors

For those people with special dietary restrictions (Halal, Kosher, Vegetarian), or those who need specific ingredients from other parts of Asia, there are food importers who will deliver these items to your door.

https://www.indobazaar.com/	Indian Frozen foods, spices, and dry foods
https://www.ambikajapan.com/	Indian foods, drinks, and snacks
http://www.baticrom.com/	Halal foods, meats, and sweets

Medicine

The closest drugstore to OIST is Drugstore Mori in Ishikawa, just down the street from the Max Valu grocery store. All medicine pictured below can be found here.



Multi-symptom Cold Medicines:



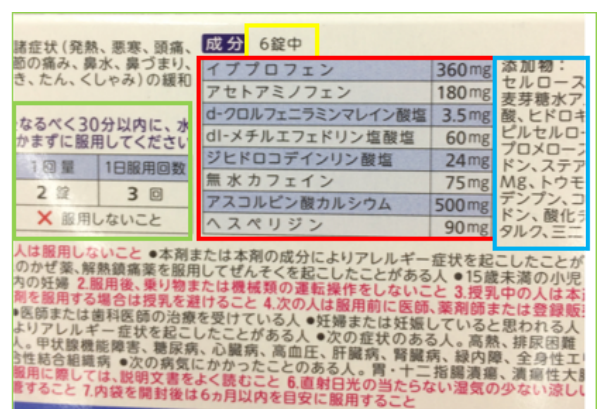
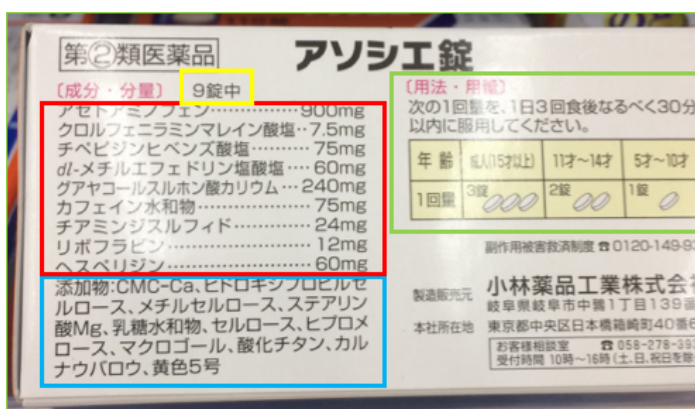
The above medicines both target runny nose, congestion, coughing, and sore throat. The left one also targets phlegm. The right one also covers fever and is "long-lasting" (taken only twice daily).

Other Cold Medicines:



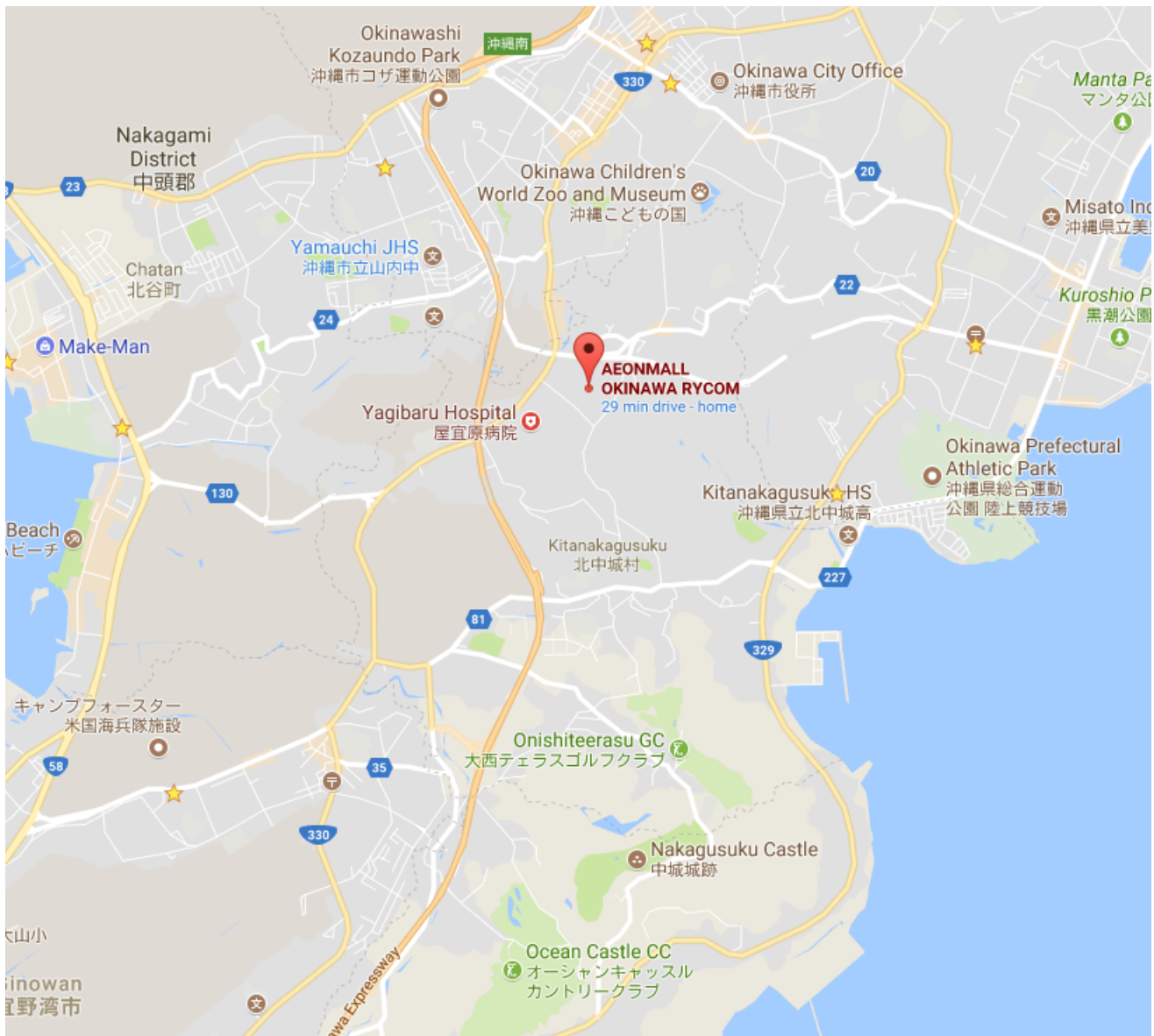
The one with the cute bunny is kid's cold medicine and covers fever, cough and runny nose. Suitable for ages 3-14. It melts in your mouth, so no swallowing required. The right picture is a series of cold medicines that allows you to pick the type depending on your predominant symptom. Yellow: Runny/congested nose; Gray: Sore throat and fever; Blue: Fever/Chills and Headache

Throat Lozenges:



Above are two brands of throat lozenges to help with sore throats or irritated throat/horse voice (maybe after your first marathon karaoke session).

Cough/Phlegm Medicine:



Specifically for cough and phlegm. Doesn't cover other symptoms.

Antihistamine/Hay Fever/Allergy Medicine:



The left is the common antihistamine Allegra (Fexofenadine), taken twice daily. The right is taken once daily, and the active ingredient is Epinastine (brand names **Alesion, Elestat, Purivist, Relestat**).

Menstrual Cramp/Pain Relief Medicine:



These both are advertised as pain relief medicine covering menstrual cramps, headaches, toothaches, and fever. Vassarina's main active ingredient is aspirin, whereas Meridon contains Ibuprofen.

Other general pain relief/fever reducer medicine:



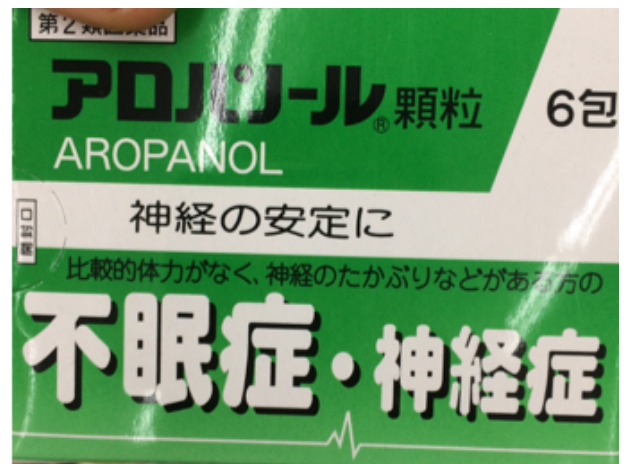
Excedrin advertises for headache and shoulder pain. Tylenol advertises for headaches and menstrual cramps. Tylenol also advertises as gentle enough to be taken on an empty stomach. Aspirin and bufferin advertise for general pain relief and fever reduction.

Motion Sickness/Nausea and Insomnia medicine:



The left is for motion sickness and nausea. The right is a sleep aid.

Reading labels:



Here are two examples of labels. The red squares are active ingredient lists, which you can recognize since there are amounts listed as well. In the language section it was mentioned that learning katakana gives you the best return on your study time investment, and here is one reason why: most chemical names will be written in katakana and can be sounded out with a bit of practice. The blue squares are non-active ingredient lists. The yellow squares tell you how many pills are in the box. The green squares are dosage, frequency and timing instructions. Below is a list of kanji/phrases that will be useful in deciphering these instructions.

錠-Pill

回-time (as in one time, two times, three times)

服用-dose

1 日服用回数 -Number of doses per day

1 回量-Dosage Amount

年齢-Age

才or際歳-years old (counter for age)

食後なるべく 30分以内に-Within 30min of eating a meal

If you have concerns or questions about a given medicine, please contact the OIST Health Center at health@oist.jp or stop by their office on the B level of Center Building.

Pets

If you decided that the world is not as bright and your life is not as full without a furry friend at home - be assured that Okinawa is a nice place to own a pet!

The most common and easily available pets are, unsurprisingly, cats and dogs, but other animals are also available. Hamsters, ferrets and flying squirrels momonga are popular in Japan. You can also get all kinds of water dwelling creatures, turtles, rabbits and birds.

How to get a pet

Animals apart from cats and dogs are easiest to get at a petshop (for example, [PETBOX](#)).

Cats and dogs are also sold in pet shops, but they are very expensive (a puppy costs more than 180000 yen!) and the animal may be bred using questionable ethical standards. By far the best way to get a cat or a dog is to adopt one from a fostering organization or a shelter.

There are several animal rescue organizations in Okinawa, but the most prominent ones are [Okinawa American Animal Rescue Society](#) and [Cherubims](#), which has an animal shelter very close to OIST, in Ishikawa farming area.

These organizations always have adoptable pets, and for a small fee you can get a loyal doggie friend or a demanding but cute cat overlord.

Another plus is that the animals from these organizations usually come fully vaccinated and neutered.

Fostering an animal

If you are not sure about long term commitment required from a pet owner, but still crave for a furry company, fear not! The island is in dire need of welcoming foster homes for the rescued animals. Fostering an animal means providing a home and care for it until they are adopted. Typical fostering period ranges from couple of weeks to couple of months. For example, [Cherubims](#) functions entirely through their fosters, they don't have a dedicated facility. Go to their site and register as a [foster](#). All medical expenses are reimbursed, you will only have to provide the food and care for the animal.

Other ways to help

If you love animals but can't foster one, consider volunteering for OAARS, SOCKS or the [Animal Garden](#). The Animal Garden is a shelter which is located quite close to OIST, in Ishikawa. They always need help with maintaining the facility and dog walking. There is a group at OIST who make regular volunteering trip there, ask around!

If you are too busy, donations are always welcome in these organizations, either in the form of money or food or other supplies.

First steps after adoption

If you decided to adopt a pet, there are few things you will have to do once you get one.

1. You will have to microchip them and register your ownership. This is a very quick and easy procedure, the chip is injected under the animal's skin with a syringe. You can do it at most veterinary clinics for about 4000 yen. Then you will be given a certificate with the microchip number and some documents to be mailed. You will take those documents to a post office, pay 1000 yen, fill in your information in the form which was given to you with the chip and give it to the post person. Some time later you will receive a confirmation certificate to your mailing address. Now, if your animal was to run off and be captured by the animal control, they will be able to read this microchip and contact you to return your furry friend home.
2. If you rescued an animal, you are strongly advised to neuter them. Okinawa has a big problem of too many strays on the streets, don't contribute to it by leaving your pet fertile! Unless you want to breed them, neuter!
3. Once you got your pet microchipped, go to Onna Village Office and ask for a pet registration directions. You will have to pay around 1000 yen, and your pet will get a cute metallic tag with the registration number. Make sure to attach it to their collar. This way if your pet escapes, you will be reunited faster. Plus, you are obliged by law to register animals in Japan.
4. If your new friend hasn't yet had their vaccination, do it as soon as you can. There are convenient one-shot packages, and any vet clinic can do it. The prices will range depending on the size, age and species of your animal. Expect it to be around 5000-7000 yen for a cat or a smaller dog and 8000 or so for a medium 12-15 kg dog. The vaccination is supposed to be repeated every year.
5. **Very important for dog owners:** a very serious canine disease known as the [heartworm](#) is overwhelmingly prevalent in Okinawa. Basically, if you don't use preventatives, your dog will get it. Preventatives come in form of chewable pills which you give to the dog once a month, or shots which you do once a year. These heartworm preventatives also kill other wormy passengers. You can buy preventatives from a vet or online (for example, [here](#)). The cost for one pill ranges from 300 to 500 yen or so. I recommend to buy your first half a year from a vet and then establish a supply from an online store.
6. Get a pet insurance! Veterinary care in Japan is not cheap, and if something serious happens, the price may be in the range of thousands of dollars for a surgery. [Here](#) you can find the available insurance options and their comparison. Unfortunately it's in Japanese, but you can always ask someone for help. A reasonable expected price of a young dog insurance is about 12000-17000 per year with 70-80% expenses coverage for bills above certain threshold (usually around 30000 yen).

Recreation

There are dozens of nice hiking trails in Okinawa which are an amazing activity for both the dog and their owner.

There is an off-leash dog park in Okinawa-shi called [Chibana Dog Park](#). It is free, and you can let your dog run around and socialize with other dogs. But make sure your pet is not aggressive. Also, take a lot of poo bags.

Manners

Make sure to pick up your dog's poop, seriously. On campus and in a city it is a must, not so much in the wilderness of a forest. Exercise common sense and carry spare bags around with you. Ask other dog owners how to dispose of the droppings.

Veterinary care

Here is the list of nearby vet clinics:

[Veterinary Clinics](#)

Recreation

Outdoor

Okinawa has amazing nature, so as long as you are willing to brave the heat, there is a lot to explore!

Waterfalls

Tadake Falls (or Taa-taki)-A popular waterfall destination now with recently constructed parking lot area.

Aha Falls-A tiny falls with a lovely lake for swimming.

Fukugawa Falls- A hidden gem. Not filled with tourists. Two waterfalls for the price of one! The first waterfall is a short 15-20 min hike on a well maintained path. The path to the second water is not well maintained and largely consists of hiking up a river with huge boulders in it. It's a blast if you love to jump and climb on rocks. The hike up to the second waterfall also takes you to the top of the first one. More info [here](#).

Hiji Falls

The above list is just to get you started. More detailed information can be found with a quick Google search.

Indoors

Mihama 7Plex

Mihama 7Plex is the main movie theater in Chatan, within the American Village. Upcoming and current movie listings can be found [here](#). The Star Theaters chain run multiple theaters on the island, but Mihama tends to have the most movies with English language audio. You can identify which movies will have English audio (with Japanese Subtitles), by looking for the character 《字》 next to it.



[Rycom](#)

Aeon Mall Okinawa Rycom (or Rycom for short) is the largest mall in all of Okinawa, with many stores nowhere else on the island. Located in the heart of Okinawa City, this mall offers several floors of shopping, as well as a movie theater (also run by Star Theaters).



US Presence

On top of the Okinawans living on the island, there is a substantial US Military presence on the islands, mostly residing within closed bases near Okinawa City and Naha. You may encounter some of these people off base too, especially near Chatan. Unfortunately you cannot usually go onto a base, unless you have a military friend who can escort you. On rare occasions public events will be hosted at bases, but even then certain nationalities are not permitted to enter.

OIST

Resources

Ganjuu

[Ganju Wellbeing Service](#) aims to support the whole of the OIST community with the many challenges that can come with research. These include physical health, change, working environment, family and social relationships, life events, deadlines, skills and experience. The Ganjuu Wellbeing Service is free and open to anyone who is part of the OIST community. This includes anyone who works or studies at OIST as well as their family members. Ganjuu is found in the village, at West Court 128. They are all very friendly and willing to listen to any concerns you may have. If it seems daunting to walk into Ganjuu with no lead up, consider speaking to a Peer Supporter first, for a more informal conversation and easier transition to conversing with Ganjuu.

Student Support

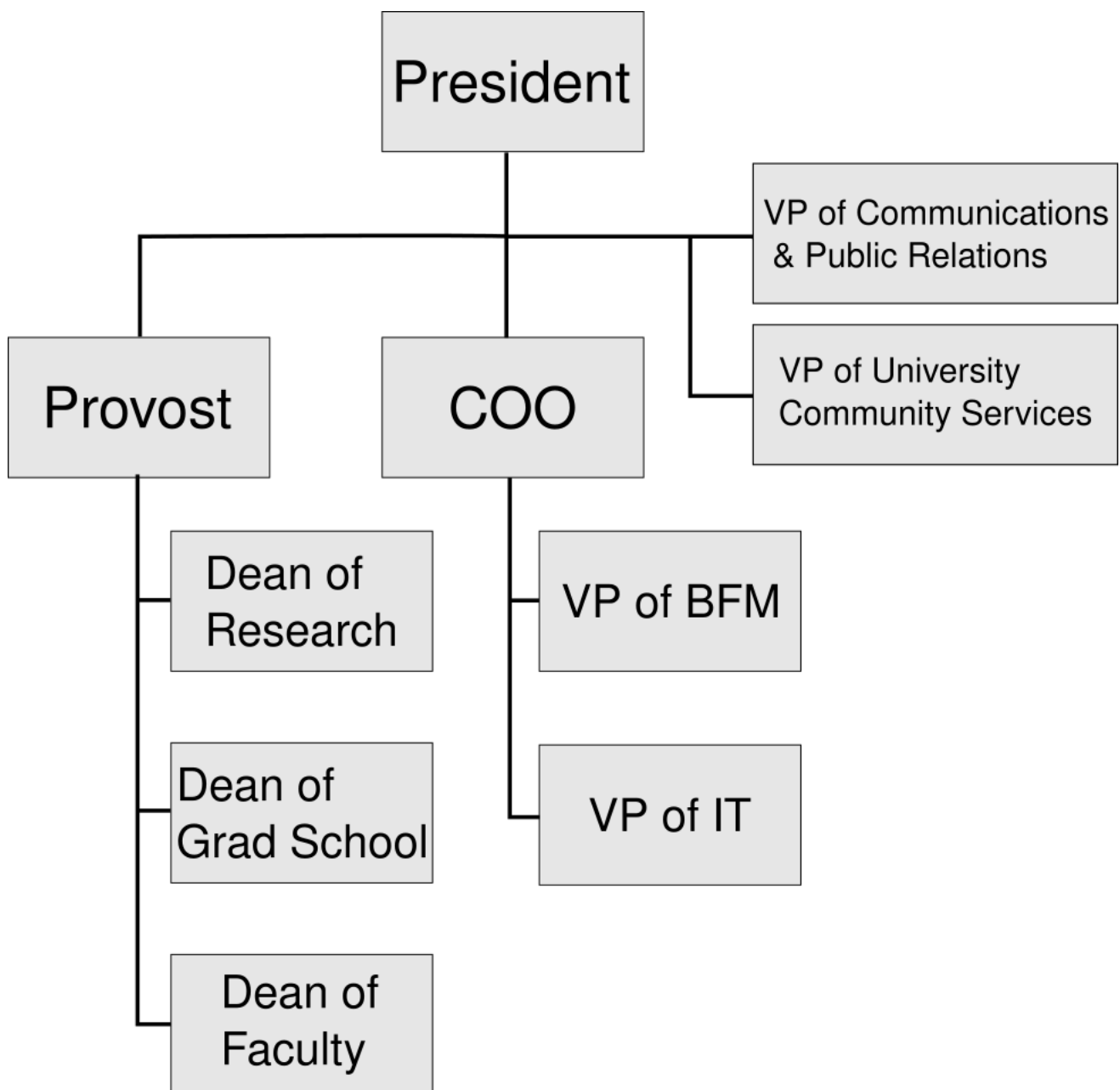
Student Support has most likely been your first point of contact upon arrival in Japan. Over the course of your PhD here Student Support will often be the first place to ask questions regarding your status in Japan, as a student and a resident. A list of the various subsections within Student Support can be found [here](#), and the relevant forms they may request of you can be found [here](#).

Student Assembly

The Student Assembly is how the students chose to organize themselves to discuss issues affecting all of them and take action on them collectively. The Assembly meets on the monthly basis, with the meeting itself being run by the Student Council. The Council is elected every winter, with different positions having different responsibilities to help direct student representation and action on particular issues. Although it is not required to take administrative matters to the Student Council, it is advised to at least discuss it with a member of the council due to their regular meetings for OIST executives on behalf of the students.

OIST Executives

Although it is unlikely one would need to directly speak to an executive at OIST, it is still good to understand their different roles and responsibilities. The basic executive structure of OIST is broken down as follows (keep in mind other executives seldom encountered by students are not included):



Dean of Research/Provost:

The Dean of Research is responsible for managing all common resources and equipment and policies relating to the use of them. This also includes research support sections and technicians, as well as safety. The Provost oversees the Deans, ensuring the proper functioning of the Graduate School.

Dean of the Graduate School:

The Dean of the Graduate School is responsible for developing the policy of the school, as well as representing the students' interest among the executive.

Dean of Faculty Affairs:

The Faculty Affairs Office deals with all matters of an academic nature, including appointments and promotions, salary setting, leaves of absence and sabbaticals, appeals, reviews of the faculty-unit 5-year subsidy funding, administrative support for the Faculty Assembly and the Faculty Council, maintaining a Faculty database, and working with other University offices and committees to facilitate effective communication and to develop new policies, as well as being responsible for the [Faculty Handbook](#).

Chief Operating Officer:

The Chief Operating Officer managed all internal affairs outside of the Graduate School. They also work with compliance to ensure all legal concerns are accounted for.

VP of Buildings and Facilities Management:

The VP of Buildings and Facilities Management is in charge of all building maintenance and construction, including the campus housing. They also manage the vehicles bookable through Outlook for personal and professional use.

VP of Information Technology:

The VP of Information Technology manages all IT related research systems, such as the computing cluster, networking in the labs, and support for research computers.

VP of Communications and Public Relations:

The VP of Communications and Public Relations is responsible for all matter pertaining to OIST's public image and external events promoting OIST. They also manage the OIST website and control access to certain large rooms used most for events (ex: Auditorium, B250). Any matters regarding outreach or representing OIST beyond campus typically go through them in some form.

VP of University Community Services:

The VP of University Community Services is a rather new position responsible for looking over internal services for university members. This includes the Gym, the Ganjuu Wellbeing Service, and the Child Development Center.

Peer Supporters

[Main Site](#)

The Student Peer Support Program is Student Council – Ganjuu initiative that was developed in recognition of the essential role that students play in supporting and encouraging each other on a day-to-day basis; it consists of an informal team of 12 lovely student volunteers who have gone through training with Ganjuu, that you can go to for emotional and social support.

Resource Center

[Main Site](#)

The Resource Center is the catch-all point for any questions you may have about living in Okinawa. In fact they can help with just about any question that requires help from a Japanese person, including translation and assistance with phone calls. Their website linked above contains a plethora of information, well beyond the scope of this guide. They have locations both by the ATM in Center Building, as well as in the Village next to the Gym.

Hours:

Center Building: 9:00 - 17:30 (except lunch time)

Village Center: 9:00 - 12:00, 14:00 - 17:30

Village Center

The Village Center Office is the main point of contact for all matters regarding living within the Campus Village. They are open from 9:00am-6:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am-5:00pm on weekends. Although they represent the company you sign the lease of your apartment to, they can also be very helpful for little things for day-to-day life, such as helping you call delivery companies when you miss a package delivery or translating your latest mail. They also offer a dry cleaning service, arranging for pickup and delivery with a local company.

Booking Cars and Rooms

OIST uses Outlook for its internal email and calendar system, making it easy to arrange meetings based on their schedules. However, it is also utilized for booking rooms on campus for meetings. To book the one car available for personal use, you need to email parking2@oist.jp. This booking must be approved manually, so you can only confirm bookings during working hours, including bookings for the weekend. Cars can be booked up to one month before the date of use, and for up to 24hr periods.

Clubs

OSA

Our OSA student chapter was started in Cork, Ireland, and moved to Okinawa along with the chapter advisor and the then-student president. We have been at the Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology Graduate University (OIST) for the past four years. During this time our chapter has been especially active in outreach events by teaching at local schools, giving talks, and taking part in local large science promotional events. In the last year alone we have participated in outreach extending to approximately 7,500 people. This year we continue our outreach endeavors and take on the challenging task of hosting an IONS conference.

More info here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1619680761641546/>

OIST Photographic Society

The OIST Photographic Society is designed to welcome all photo enthusiasts—experts and novices, large cameras or small, including smartphones. It meets every other Monday at lunchtime.

The way it works is that at each meeting the members are issued a photography challenge, and then at the next meeting you sit down to discuss the photos taken for that challenge. If you don't feel like participating in the challenge, no worries, you can join just to talk about photos. Or, if you can't make the meetings, check out the Facebook group to discuss and post photos as well: [OIST Photographic Society](#).

The club is headed by RA student Neil Dalphin, and he's happy to welcome everybody to join. If you're interested, please contact him at neil.dalphin@oist.jp.

Climbing Club

Originally formed by interested students and researchers, the OIST Climbing Club organizes casual trips to climbing gyms around Okinawa, as well as weekly practice sessions at our own small bouldering wall just above campus. No experience with climbing is required! You can find more information at the following group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/260842224382107>

Computer Science Club

At its heart, programming is a creative endeavor, and nowadays, it's almost essential to all forms of scientists. This club is for the hobby programmers -- those who calculate on GPU's and are proud of it! It's for those who stay up late at night on [wikipedia's list of algorithms](#) and try to figure out what the heck [Jaro-Winkler distance](#) is. It's for those folks who go out of their way to create what is probably the [worst sort of sorting algorithm\(pdf\)](#). We accept anyone, but this is not a series of tutorials on programming. For the most part, we just get together for a few code nights a year and some hack-a-thingie's.

Email: james.schloss@oist.jp

Meeting Room Activities

The Meeting Room in the Village Center is heavily used during the workweek, so the Resource Center organizes the schedule into blocks to ensure fair usage. The following [link](#) shows everything that happens on a weekly basis, but it is still possible to book outside of these times by contacting the Resource Center.

Martial Arts Club

There is a healthy variety of martial arts disciplines practiced at OIST, which largely function separately, but are all covered under the umbrella of Martial Arts Club. General information for all the various martial arts clubs can be found here: <https://groups.oist.jp/martialarts>

Capoeira Club

Capoeira is an Afro-Brazilian art that combines martial arts, dance movements, gymnastics and movement flow. Musical instruments, rhythm, and song are also at the heart of capoeira. It has something for everyone!

Never done a cartwheel before? No problem, this is the place to learn! Want to do a handstand someday? Awesome, we can teach you! Want a full-body workout that improves flexibility while also toning muscles you didn't even know you had? This is it!

The OIST capoeira club aims to create a fun, supportive environment and is open to anyone, including staff and non-OIST members of the local community.

And the best part? It's FREE! So come check it out!

Practices are Tuesdays and Thursdays from 20:30-22:00 in the Meeting Room in Village Center. Feel free to drop in anytime, but if you have any questions before coming, please e-mail: collin.stecker@oist.jp

OIST PC/Console gaming club

Although an unofficial OIST club (but growing!), OIST PC/Console gaming club is for those interested in anything related to video games or PC/Console news! Come and discuss with your fellow students on our facebook group page! (<http://goo.gl/q3rTxz>) You can exchange games, get recommendations on what games to buy for a particular system! Come discuss with us and let's play together! Please contact Sébastien Lapointe for any questions : sebastien.lapointe@oist.jp

OIST Fantasy/Sci-fi literature club

Also an unofficial club, but we are growing! For those of you interested in Sci-fi, Fantasy or related genre of books, our facebook group is the right place to come discuss about your favorite book or authors! We are planning to organize a monthly meeting at a café or somewhere else of our choosing where we could go read and discuss about the books we read that month! Please don't be shy and join, it's one click away!

(<http://goo.gl/qF5M3N>). Please contact Sébastien Lapointe for any questions : sebastien.lapointe@oist.jp

Theater Lab

An unofficial drama club at OIST. So far, we have been working on developing original plays which we workshop and perform at teatime. Our first play was called "A Life in Science" and it explored in a metaphorical tongue-in-cheek manner the various stages of a scientist's life from the first discoveries of their curiosity to the retirement of a professor. Our current work-in-progress is an adaptation of the Strange Case of Jekyll and Hyde.

If you would like to try some acting and story development, come check us out! No experience required. Currently, we meet in room #1 of the conference center (across from the auditorium) on Tuesdays at 7pm though we may switch to Wednesdays. You can email questions to makoto.schreiber@oist.jp

Calligraphy club

A great way to practice writing your kanji and learn a traditional Japanese artform! The club meets every Thursday starting from 6PM or 7PM (depending on the availability of the instructors) in the Japanese classroom (C600a). All the equipment you need (mat, brush, ink, paper...) is provided for a small fee (200 yen per session).

Where: C600a (Lab 2)

When: Thursdays, 6PM-8:30PM

Contact: sho.kasumie@oist.jp

Info: <https://groups.oist.jp/calligraphy>

Basketball Club

The OIST Basketball Club is a basketball loving group of people who meet up for a friendly game once a week. The members range in skills from terrible to sensational so anyone who has an interest in the game will feel at home. More information here: <https://groups.oist.jp/basketball>

Football Club

The OIST Soccer Club has something for everyone! If you want to improve your skills with other OIST staff, we organize a weekly practice session (usually on Monday for an hour) followed by a kickaround which allows to put in practice what we learnt just before. It usually takes place at the indoor [Akama Sports ground](#) (time and location are announced on the [mailing list](#)) from 7pm to 9pm. You are also welcome to join the kickaround part only, as long as you let us know in advance. This is for organization purpose, as we need to know approximately the number of people interested in joining to decide whether to book a full or half court. To cover the cost of hiring the Akama ground there is a small fee (~300-400 yen per person) for participation.

For those who are interested in a more competitive game we also organize sessions every Friday with Onna FC team members, which also usually take place at [Akama](#). This is a chance to get a good work out and test your skills with the friendly Onna-son group, in a fantastic indoor arena. The participation fee for the Friday game is usually also 300 yen per person.

Enquiries can be made to Club President Karim at karim.essafi@oist.jp, and to hear the latest announcements you can join the mailing list by subscribing to the [OIST FC Google group](#).

Swing Club

The "OISTer Swing Club" has triple-stepped its way on to campus! With the recent discovery of hidden swing dancers amongst us and the local community, a new club has been formed to promote this fun and social dance. The club aims to spread the love of swing to novices and to organize opportunities for dancers to get together.

Swing Dancing is a form of social, partner dance that grew out of Jazz and Big Band music in the United States. Swing Dancing was widely popular in the 1920s-50s and has resurfaced again, spreading all over the world. Today, welcoming communities of swing dancers exist in most major cities and we hope to bring this tradition to Onna-son! Swing dance includes variations like Lindy Hop, East Coast Swing, Jitterbug, and Charleston.

If you would like to be a member (to get regular updates about club events; and to help us stay organized!), please sign up on the [Membership Application](#) tab. Membership is free and open to everyone - OISTers, residents of Okinawa, as well as visitors. Even as a non-member, please feel free to drop by to any of our events, and dance with us!

More info here: <https://groups.oist.jp/swing>

Film Club

The Film Club's main goal is to show movies on a regular basis, with the purpose of encouraging discussion of Film. They update their Facebook page weekly with information about what movies/events will be held in and around OIST. They encourage feedback from people in OIST so that they can keep the types of movies that they show relevant. More info here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1515812195364594/>

SOCKs

Save Okinawa's Cats and Kittens (SOCKs) are animal lovers dedicated to the humane treatment and care of the stray cat population at OIST and in Okinawa. They conduct regular TNR operations to help control the stray cat population on the island. In addition, they assist with the humane animal shelter Animal Garden, which houses cats and dogs that would otherwise be put down for being strays. You can find more information from their [Facebook Page](#) or by emailing tapan.sabuwala@oist.jp

Other clubs

Clubs at OIST come and go, depending on interest, availability of teachers/instructors and members, and many other factors.

Groups, the internal OIST website, lists clubs that have been officially registered at OIST: <https://groups.oist.jp/> and deploy the "Clubs" section to see the list. They are also listed on the Tida Links page (<https://tida.oist.jp/links>) under the "Clubs" section. Most of the clubs have a contact form or email address on their groups webpage. If a club isn't active anymore, don't despair! If you are motivated, you may be the one to revive it.

Some clubs have not applied for official OIST recognition, so they are not all listed here. To know about activities, you can:

- Check TIDA: many clubs list their meetings there.
- Check Facebook: some clubs have a Facebook page and use it to announce their meetings.

- Talk to your friends/senpai: word of mouth is still the best option!

Graduate School

Classes

Although the full course catalog is available online ([here](#)), there is also a slowly growing repository of anonymous reviews of professors, as both teachers for courses and research supervisors. You can find the repository [here](#), and as time goes on please contribute your experiences to the database to help future students.

Stipend

The stipend paid by OIST is currently 2.4 million yen per year. We receive an additional amount calculated to cover the OIST tuition and the incurring tax on this amount (yes, it's a bit complicated).

During your first year, unless you were previously an intern or OIST employee and earned taxable income, you will not be subject to income tax. This will start in your second year (the amount varies over time and is based on your previous year's income but it should be somewhere between 10 and 15,000 yen per month).

The stipend is not subject to annual adjustment and thus hasn't changed since the first students joined. However, this year, the Student Council has defended a re-evaluation to take into account the effect of inflation (notably due to the consumption tax increase from 5% to 8% in April 2014). The matter is currently in the hands of HR.

Year 1: Lab Rotations

When you are accepted to OIST, you have to decide before you come which labs you would like to rotate through during your first year. However, it may not be entirely clear what it is you should be getting out of these rotations, apart from research experience. It is important to understand that there is no single measure of a successful rotation, for it strongly depends on how far along you are in deciding upon your thesis topic.

If you are unsure of where to do your thesis, then use the rotation to get a strong sense for what sort of science the unit does, and how you interact with the people in it. The project in this case does not have to lead to something bigger, but can serve as an exercise to make you more familiar with the possibilities the unit can provide.

Conversely, if you are already sure of where you would like to go, you can use the rotation to get a head start on your thesis. This leaves you free to use other rotations to gain other skills outside your preferred unit that may be helpful in the future. This also applies to the out of field rotation you are required to do: it is not expected that you will do your thesis there, but it can still prove to be an enriching experience. The definition of what is out-of-field differs for different people, and there is no strict definition. Some people can work far outside their specialty, while others won't thrive too far out of field and will be allowed to argue their choice.

Once you have found a unit you are comfortable with, make it clear to the unit's professor as soon as possible that you are interested in joining their lab. The sooner they can decide on whether or not they are able to take you on as a student, the sooner you can begin planning your thesis. Faculty have the right to decline a request. Normally this happens after the rotations, when you nominate your preliminary thesis lab, but of course it is better to know earlier.

Extra Rotations

There is a chance, that after three rotations you are still unsure where to do your thesis. Some common reasons include: not happy with the lab environment, not what you expected, your ideas changed or simply you want to try something else before making the important decision. In that case, it may be a good idea to do an extra rotation.

Choosing the right lab is one of the most important decision you will make during your PhD. Extra rotations will help you make this decision but they also come with sacrifices. Most likely you will have less time to write your thesis proposal and finish your PhD. Since time is your most precious commodity, try to minimise the extra rotations you take.

If you decide that doing a fourth rotation is worth it then you need to inform the right people and seek guidance. First, talk to your academic mentor. Second, contact the supervisor you want to work with and ensure that it is possible to have a rotation in their lab. Third, contact the graduate school (Tip: it is always a good idea to consult experienced students). Do not wait until the last minute to inform the right people. Do it as soon as possible for a smooth transition.

Doing an extra rotation can be a very enriching, healthy or necessary step for a great PhD experience. Keep the extra rotations to a minimum so you can use your time to complete your PhD.

Year 2: Thesis Proposal Steps and Exam

Before the end of your second academic year you must have passed your evaluation to proceed, and we ask that you submit your thesis proposal and nominate an external examiner in the 9th month of your thesis proposal year (normally during May). You and your supervisor will nominate a suitable external examiner. The CEC will assess if the examiner is an expert in the field and if there are any conflicts of interest. They will also appoint the members of your thesis proposal exam committee (external examiner, internal examiner and the chair). Once approved, the Grad School arranges examiner travel and sets an exam date. If the exam is early, you must submit the thesis proposal at least 4 weeks before hand. If the exam is set late, you still need to submit the thesis proposal in the 9th month (or negotiate for and arrange an extension).

There are multiple aims for this exam:

1. Assessment: to assess if you are qualified to do the proposed research
2. Feedback: to get useful advice from international experts that will help improve your project early on.
3. Scientific communication: to assess if you can write a scientific proposal and defend it orally.

The exam is maximum 3 hours long. During the exam you have 15 minutes to present your work to the thesis committee. Then they will ask you questions about the background in your field, preliminary work and the thesis proposal. The exam will be coordinated by the chair. After the exam you will probably have a good idea about the outcome. Afterwards, you will probably have the opportunity to discuss with your examiner informally. Who knows, maybe you will even have lunch/dinner together.

The thesis proposal exam is an essential requirement for your PhD progression. In some cases the proposal exam can be a bumpy ride. Some challenges you may encounter are:

1. It is hard to find an available examiner: Experts in the field are usually busy people. That means that they may not have time to come for many months. Maybe because of circumstances the external

examiner cancels their trip to okinawa (i.e. personal reason, illness, travel problems etc.). If the exam is cancelled you will need to find another examiner. Therefore, have a handful of potential examiners in mind and expect that it might take a while for the exam to take place.

2. Proposal results: It is possible that there were problems with your thesis proposal work. In that case you may have to make major revision to your proposal and perhaps a re-examination. In that case you need to make the necessary changes. The possible outcomes of the examination are: pass without revisions, minor revisions, major revisions, major revisions with re-examination and fail. If you do not agree with the outcome you can appeal.

Whatever the situation may be, talk to your supervisor. Work together to find a constructive solution to the problems. If you need more support there are other resources at your disposal: your academic mentor, the graduate school, fellow students and the Ganjuu Wellbeing Center. Finally, the system is designed to help you make the most out of you PhD.

Fellowships

Most information about fellowships and scholarships can be found here:

<https://groups.oist.jp/grad/scholarships-information-oist-graduate-students>, but there are a few things to note:

1. When you accept a fellowship, you will be granted the full fellowship amount, and then OIST will provide its promised stipend amount of 2.4 million yen until you have 3.0 million yen. OIST will not pay you over this amount, and this means that you will be funded by both your external fellowship or scholarship and OIST simultaneously.
2. Because you will have 2 funding bodies, you are not eligible for all fellowships. The list provided in the above link are all considered "safe" by OIST. If you have another fellowship or scholarship in mind, please **ask the graduate school before applying!**
3. To OIST, your official title will be "Teaching Assitant" after acceptance of a fellowship above 0.6 million yen.
4. For the most part, OIST keeps track of student taxes and a few other matters without consulting the student. In the case of the JSPS fellowships, the amount of funding from OIST is not necessarily enough to pay for all the taxes and such. Because of this, you will need to go to Family Mart and pay your taxes and a few other expenses yourself. Be sure to ask the Graduate School for help, if you need it!
5. OIST is primarily focused on the JSPS DC1 and 2 fellowships and you will be asked to apply for these in your second year while writing your thesis proposal.

Overall, fellowships are not at all necessary while at OIST, but they are certainly encouraged. Because of the way funding is allocated, the Graduate School can use the funding freed up from fellowships to help other students who may be taking a little extra time to complete their PhD. In addition, they look great on your CV!

As always, the Graduate School knows a lot about this, so if you are interested in applying for fellowships, ask them first!

Academic Mentors

The Graduate School will assign you a member of Faculty to act as your Academic mentor. Your mentor is chosen with consideration of, among other things, language and cultural background, personality, gender, research field, and any other relevant information available to look for a good match. The mentor initially assists with course selection, and later serves on your thesis supervisory committee. The mentor cannot be

the thesis supervisor, as they have different roles. The purpose of the Academic Mentor as described by the Graduate School is as follows:

The academic mentor relationship is to provide a long-term support and advice to the student, which is not intended to duplicate the kind of relationship one has with a research supervisor. While on the Committee, the use of that term is not the same as it is in American universities. Rather, the mentor acts as an advocate for the student, where the supervisor may be acting in the best interests of the lab rather than the student. You are not required to be an expert in the field of the thesis, only passingly familiar with it, and we generally pick mentors in a very broad field. The thesis supervisor and co-supervisor provide the expert supervisory support, while the mentor can act as an alternate supporter of the student. Yes, provide course advice, but also, emotional support and encouragement when things get tough, and general career step advice, etc

Academic mentors are especially important in the first and second year as you are taking classes and planning your thesis direction. Although they may not be experts in your exact topic, they are an invaluable outside perspective to help you develop as a scientist. However, mentoring styles differ from professor to professor, so it is crucial that you have a healthy supportive relationship with your mentor. You are free to change your mentor whenever you want, but it is recommended to settle on your mentor in your first year before you settle into a thesis lab and research topic.

Summer Schools and Conferences

Travel funding at OIST

OIST offers each student funding for one conference/workshop/summer school trip each academic year.

Travel Request Best Practices:

Once you have a conference in mind, it is best to talk to your supervisor and Student Support about your interest as soon as possible. Even if you are not yet accepted to the conference or need to wait on visa requirements, the sooner you begin the conversation, the more accommodating the Graduate School will be with your request.

In the first two years, because of class and rotation requirements, travel requests are subject to more scrutiny before being accepted. When you submit your request:

- Make sure that the trip is well justified for your personal scientific development.
- Get permission from your mentor and your rotation/thesis lab supervisor.
- Ideally, the travel should happen in periods without classes, but it's not always possible. In this case, make sure to make all the necessary arrangements with faculty whose courses you are taking at that time, and provide emails as justification to the Graduate School.
- Travel to conferences without presentation is not encouraged. In your first two years, it's a good idea to use your travel funding for summer schools, courses and workshops that can supplement your training at OIST.

Finding a Summer School or Conference:

Although OIST promises each student the ability to travel to whichever conferences or summer schools they wish to attend, it is still quite a challenge to find those events in the first place. Here are a few sources of inspiration to start (we will add a more detailed and dynamic list on the [Student Assembly website](#) soon):

General

- Conferences and workshops aggregated across fields: <https://www.conference-service.com/index.html>
- Summer Schools in Europe: <http://www.summerschoolsineurope.eu/>
- Short Courses Portal: <http://www.shortcoursesportal.com>

Field-specific

- High Energy and Theoretical Physics: <https://inspirehep.net/collection/Conferences>
- Molecular Biology: EMBL courses <https://www.embl.de/training/events/index.php>

Searching for a course

Many structures organize or aggregate courses, workshops, summer schools:

- Universities and research institutions (Cold Spring Harbor Lab, Janelia Farm...)
- Equipment/reagent vendors, such as NEB, Jackson Laboratory, Zeiss...
- Scientific societies (international, continental, national)