

November 3, 2020

Dear AKP Students,

We hope this email finds you well as Election Day moves forward here in the US. As you know, our staff and faculty have been hard at work to prepare for your Spring 2021 semester over the past few months.

Since AKP was first established in 1972, our mission has been to offer a rigorous yet supportive academic and cultural experience that would immerse our students into Japan as a community member. It is this commitment to both our students' experience and their well-being that has driven all of us to do whatever we could to make Spring 2021 possible for you. But it has also made us recognize that the many challenges that do remain will make it difficult to deliver a program that is both enriching and safe for all involved.

Thus, it is with great regret that the AKP Board of Directors will be cancelling our Spring 2021 semester.

This decision was not made lightly. In the past 48 years, there has never been a year where AKP has not welcomed students to Kyoto. Although Japan has done well with managing the pandemic, more than a few factors give us pause. Some of the things considered by our Board of Directors include:

- the continuing unpredictability of the pandemic and the global situation as we head into the winter months;
- the uncertainty regarding the availability of classrooms and other facilities; and,
- the balance between student experience and the stringent requirements we would need to impose to ensure the health and safety of our AKP community (which includes not just our students but also our staff, faculty, host university, and host families).

We know that this is a disappointment for many of you, particularly those who originally planned to join us in Fall 2020. Your passion for Japan has been evident during our application process, and it is what drove us to consider every possible option before arriving at this decision. Should your schedules allow it, we would be very happy to welcome you during AKP's 2021-2022 year. More information about our deferral policy can be found on our [website](#).

In lieu of an in-country program, AKP plans to bring as much of Japan as we can to your home campus through online programming this spring semester. We hope you will keep your interest in Japan strong through one of the following opportunities, which we will be continuing from the fall into the spring.

- Language Partnership Program
- Japanese Language Tables

Thank you for your understanding during these uncertain times. Now more than ever, the world we live in is interconnected, and we hope that you continue to look forward to a day when you can visit Japan. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to us_office@associatedkyotoprogram.org or your AKP Campus Representative.

Sincerely,

Peter Flueckiger
Chair of the Board of Directors
Associated Kyoto Program