

June 20, 2016

To: All Students

From: Student Initiative Support Office, Student Support Center

Subject: Student Volunteering in Disaster-Stricken Areas

In Kumamoto, where many people have suffered from the massive earthquake, humanitarian relief is being delivered not only from within Japan but from all over the world. Various recovery initiatives have already been undertaken, but Kumamoto is still in need of further assistance to fully recover from this natural catastrophe.

As such, the Institute — in acknowledgement of the significance of volunteer work — will offer support to students of Tokyo Tech who choose to engage in the recovery effort as volunteers in disaster-stricken areas. The following guidelines have been issued to ensure the safety of students as well as to provide make-up/catch-up opportunities and excused absences for their participation in volunteer activities.

Guidelines

A. Points that student volunteers must note when doing voluntary work

Volunteer activities are, first and foremost, intended to support the victims of disaster, and it is of utmost importance not to aggravate the situation or cause further harm to the people of the affected areas. Students, especially those who are inexperienced in volunteer work, should be aware of the following points in order to avoid trouble or accidents during their activities.

(1) Mandatory enrollment in volunteer activity insurance

Enrollment at local sites: Students are required to enroll in volunteer activity insurance that will cover the entire travel route to and from the volunteer site. This can be done at places such as the local council of social welfare.

Enrollment in natural disaster plans: As Kumamoto is still experiencing countless aftershocks which pose further risks to the safety of the people, it is mandatory that students enroll in an insurance plan that covers natural disasters.

(2) Permission from academic supervisors

Participation in volunteer work must be approved by the student's academic supervisor who must sign the Volunteer Activity Form. (If the student is an undergraduate, he/she must obtain approval from the relevant chief of the academic group or department chair.)

(3) Submission of Volunteer Activity Form

Students are required to submit a Volunteer Activity Form prior to their travel, which states the nature and locality of their volunteer work, to the Student Support Division of either Ookayama or Suzukakedai Campuses.

(4) Gain knowledge about volunteer work

(a) Volunteering should not be taken lightly. It is not only important for students to learn beforehand about the activity itself, but also to consider various factors such as their own health before deciding to participate.

(b) Prior to departure, students must prepare and organize their own food, shelter, and means of transportation.

(c) Students should also bring any specific items and prepare anything which they specifically need.

(d) If students fall ill due to fatigue, physical distress from changing weather conditions, or post-traumatic stress disorder, their health and well-being must come first, and they must therefore suspend all volunteer work.

(e) Students should keep in mind that volunteering is not always physical work, but that it can also be achieved by supporting local businesses, thereby helping to revitalize the local economy.

(f) Students should be extra careful as aftershocks continue to occur in the local area, posing risks of secondary disaster.

B. Excused absences and class credit

(1) Absence from class due to participation in volunteer activities

(a) Students will not be marked absent for up to two missed classes in a quarter due to volunteer work, but they will be marked absent from the third time on. Upon receipt of the Volunteer Activity Form, the Student Division will contact the instructors of the courses from which students will be absent. However, this will not apply to students who have not submitted the Volunteer Activity Form.

(b) Students who cannot attend classes due to their volunteer activities will be able to catch up through the Tokyo Tech OpenCourseWare, which provides self-instruction for the missed material. Additionally, students will have the opportunity to ask their course instructors questions.

(2) Credit from volunteer activities

If volunteer work is related to a particular course and its objectives, the activity will be counted towards course requirements and ultimately contribute to the overall course credit.

Ask the course instructors.

Related Links

- Japan National Council of Social Welfare
<http://www.shakyo.or.jp/saigai/katudou.html>
- Kumamoto Prefectural Council of Special Welfare
<http://www.fukushi-kumamoto.or.jp/default.asp>
- Disaster support and volunteer information website concerning the Kumamoto Earthquake
<http://shienp.net/>
- Tokyo Council of Social Welfare (volunteer activity insurance)
<http://www.tcsw.tvac.or.jp/activity/hoken.html>
- Points to remember regarding volunteer insurance
http://www.shakyo.or.jp/saigai/pdf/20110329_01_v3.pdf
- Volunteer Activity Form
http://www.siengp.titech.ac.jp/boshuu/H28volunteer_katsudou.pdf

Contact information

- Inquiries related to volunteer activities:
Student Initiative Support Office
Student Support Center
Extension: 7629
Email: siengp@jim.titech.ac.jp
- Inquiries related to the submission of Volunteer Activity Form (Ookayama Campus)
Support Planning Group
Student Support Division
Extension: 3011
Email: gak.sie@jim.titech.ac.jp
- Inquiries related to the submission of Volunteer Activity Form (Suzukakedai Campus)
Student Support Group
Student Services Division
Extension: 5935
Email: suz.gak@jim.titech.ac.jp
- Inquiries related to matters regarding courses (undergraduates, Ookayama Campus)
Undergraduate Services Group
Student Division
Extension: 3004

Email: kyo.gak@jim.titech.ac.jp

- Inquiries related to matters regarding courses (graduates, Ookayama Campus)

Graduate Services Group

Student Division

Extension: 3005

Email: kyo.dai@jim.titech.ac.jp

- Inquiries related to matters regarding courses (Suzukakedai Campus)

Student Group

Student Division

Extension: 5933

Email: suz.kyo@jim.titech.ac.jp