

Campus Life in the University of Tokyo S.D (America)

Student life at the University of Tokyo can be very enjoyable from the beginning. With an open mind and willingness to learn about the Japanese culture and language, your life in Japan will be full of surprises and memorable experiences.



For a successful student life, balance between work and hobbies is a key component. In my own experience, I was able to continue practicing *Capoeira* during my studies at the University of Tokyo. Capoeira is an Afro-Brazilian martial art and self-defense form that brings together fighting techniques, acrobatics, percussion, and songs, in a rhythmic dialogue of body, mind, and spirit. The players face each other using Capoeira movements, mixing self-defense kicks and moves with playful acrobatics and dance-like swings, improvising strategies to fool their opponents and catch them off guard. The rhythm for the game is established by clapping, singing and playing traditional instruments.

Capoeira was developed in Brazil by enslaved Africans. Since the 1500s, many Africans were taken from different areas of West Africa and brought to Brazil to be kept as slaves by the Portuguese. Generations of enslaved African people shared their customs, dances, rituals, and fighting techniques that would combine to become Capoeira. Slaves used Capoeira for fighting, escaping and resisting capture, but concealed its combative purpose through music, song, and dance. That needed to be disguised, and trickery is part of what separates Capoeira from other martial arts.



By learning Japanese I was able at first, to communicate with my Capoeira teammates. And by improving my language skills, I was capable of developing meaningful friendships, along side our shared interest in this martial art; and relate better with Japanese friends. Learning Japanese language is an important aspect for my daily life, and it has contributed to my successful adaptation of living in Japan, enjoying life and understanding the culture.