International freshmen adjust to campus life

Alison Bowen
News Editor

After less than 24 hours in the United States, freshman Ippei Sakurada easily shifted from conversations in careful English while meeting returning students to rapid Japanese with other international students.

Sakurada is from Hokkaido, Japan, one of the 25 countries represented by this year's freshman class.

In a class of 1,456 freshmen that is otherwise fairly typical, nearly 38 students are international, a slightly higher number than last year according to Admissions Office statistics.

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> **Melanee Crist**
> Assistant Director of International Student Affairs

Melanee Crist, Assistant Director of International Student Affairs, said the number of international students is even greater than the Admissions Office count of 38 international students because some are still waiting on visas.

To help these students adjust better to Truman, International Student Affairs is adding a new program to the two-day orientation process for international students, assigning returning students as "hall hosts" to help welcome the international students and bring them into the Truman community.

"I think that people are happier the better that they become acquainted and familiar with their surroundings and people," Crist said. "That's the focus of what we do."

Crist said that judging from the high retention rate and academic success of international students, she thinks most international students are happy with Truman.

Included in the orientation are tips on how to deal with differences between the culture of the U.S. and the culture of the student's home country.

"We talk about everything, from living with an American roommate, to the food, to the educational system," Crist said. "Everything's different."

Crist said that during orientation, they encourage international students to take the roommate contract seriously as a way to ward off problems before they happen.

"Most American students of this age are not used to sharing a room," she said. "We have a different cultural outlook on things, like we don't expect someone to use our belongings without asking. That's a cultural thing."

Although international students do not usually renew campus housing, Crist said this is not necessarily because they are not satisfied, but because of monetary and food issues.

Sophomore Kate Lawrence is a "hall host" for Dobson Hall this year. Lawrence said after hosting international students in high school and having an international student roommate, she took advantage of the opportunity to welcome other international students to the Truman community.

Lawrence underwent culture-shock training last week and since has helped students from Nepal, Japan and Serbia move into the residence halls.

"There are some [cultures] that I would never know anything about [without being a 'hall host']," she said.

Lawrence said one international freshman she met was driven to Truman by a friend from San Francisco. The two had been pen pals for the nine years he had wanted to attend school in the United States.

Following with the program's plan, Lawrence will stay in touch with international students throughout the year, driving them places they need to go and continuing to help them adjust to the Truman community.

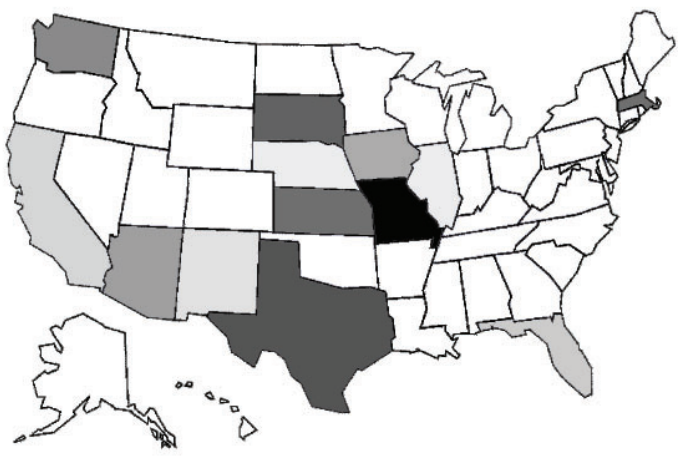
For students like Sakurada – who applied to five schools in the U.S. and chose Truman because it had high ratings and was affordable – welcoming attitudes like Lawrence's make the transition to the U.S. much easier.

After his first day in Kirksville, Sakurada said he was satisfied with his room, Truman and Kirksville.

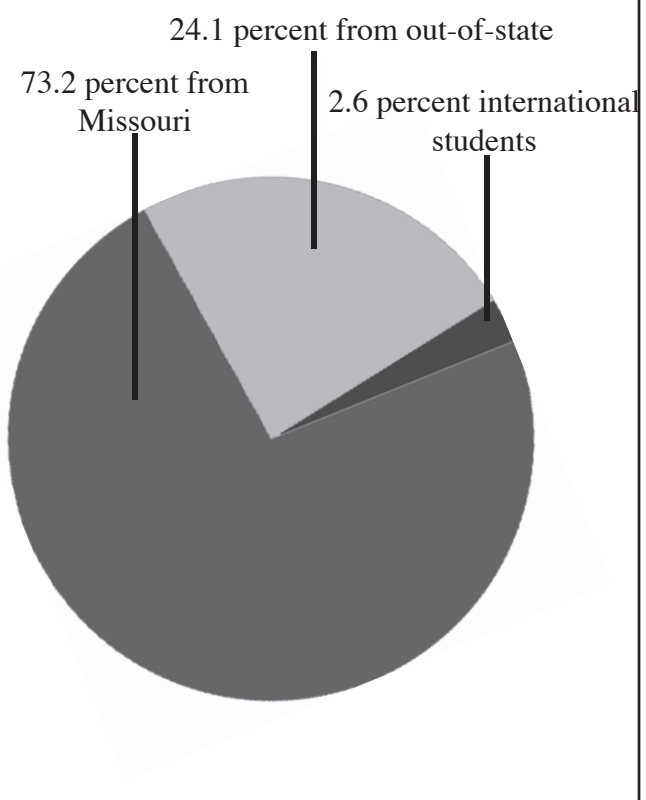
He has only one complaint.

"It's too hot," he said. "In my town [in Japan], it's a colder climate."

A matter of class



Freshmen hail from the colored states above.



Odds: 58 percent female; 42 percent male
Average high school GPA: 3.77
Largest major: Undeclared – 288
Smallest major: Classics – 3

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HCCCC | Petition asks city to reacquire land

Continued from Page 1

"The watershed committee includes none of the HCCCC members, but it does have [purchaser of the former city Creek land] Gail Novinger's son," Gaber said.

He said the HCCCC is preparing to attend the council meeting Monday. Gaber said he plans to speak before the council at the meeting.

"We want to know why they would ignore these very highly qualified volunteers," Gaber said.

The committee has spent the summer promoting awareness about Hazel Creek and other water-related issues, Gaber said.

> "We are working very closely with the universities to seek as many more signatures as possible."
>
> **Ron Gaber**
> HCCCC Chair

"We have spent the majority of our summer attending the variety of public events and continuing to collect signatures," Gaber said of the petition the committee opened. So far, he said, HCCCC has collected about 3,000 signatures.

"We are working very closely with the Universities to seek as many more signatures as possible, both from new and returning students," Gaber said.

Another point of contention for the Hazel Creek issue is the length of a city-owned buffer strip between the lake and private property. A buffer strip could help keep some pollutants from entering Hazel Creek Lake through water run-off.

Macomber said she has met with the director of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources over the summer to discuss the buffer requirements for the watershed.

"The buffer strip is basically that area between the water and the adjacent property owners, that area you would prohibit activity on," she said. "When I met with the director, he informed me that there was no [width] requirement, but he asked me to put my request in a letter and he would respond. At this point I do not have a letter back from DNR."

Macomber said that when she followed up, she was informed the lack of response was due to a clerical error.

"In the meantime, we have gone out and assessed the fence – we do not have fence around Forest Lake – we met with the council around fencing," Macomber said. "And it's still not going to keep somebody's cattle out ... Where do you quit fencing, that was the question."

She said the council has not made any changes to the buffer.

"As far as I know, we've done nothing on that," Macomber said. "How do you do something when you don't know the answer?"

She said the buffer was one of the issues the watershed management committee would discuss.

Everett Baker, head of the public drinking water unit of the northeast region of DNR, said lengths for buffer strips can vary.

"An effective buffer can usually be between 200 and 300 feet," Baker said. "I generally recommend 200."

He said there are a variety of buffer strategies, including planting broad-stem or native grasses.

"[But] somebody has to plant them," Baker said. "You have the maintenance process to think about as well, because most native grasses need to be burned off."

Jack Schuster, deputy director of the Kirksville Public Works Department said, no problems have arisen yet from the water at the Hazel Creek Lake.

"We have very clean watershed," Schuster said. "It's good. My kids drink it. My kids wouldn't drink it if it wasn't perfect."

HALL | Gravel parking lot west of Centennial Hall unavailable due to construction crew storage

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Department of Public Safety director Tom Johnson said a different parking lot previously used for storage will be available for student use in place of of the gravel lot west of Centennial.

"What we've done is kind of a trade-off," he said.

The gravel lot provided about 80 to 100 parking spots, Johnson said, and the parking lot to be reopened will provide 80 parking spots.

Johnson said no parking spots will be lost because parking in a gravel lot is more arbitrary than when lines specify parking spots.

"It's lined out where the gravel is not, so it should be a little better," Johnson said. "It'll just be an adjustment of walking from a different place."

Although DPS has updated parking maps available and the information about the new parking lot on their Web site, Johnson said they are also counting on word of mouth for students to know about the new lot.

"There'll probably be some confusion, because that was a pretty heavily used lot over there," Johnson said.

Sophomore Michael Campbell said that he sometimes had trouble finding parking close to Ryle.

Johnson advised students to be patient with parking.

"Realize that at the beginning of the school year, everything's going to be kind of a mess," he said. "Everyone's going to have their car."

He also reminded students that a parking permit doesn't guarantee a spot, but rather the chance to look.

"If you don't get to park right in front of the door, you might have to go a block or two," he said.

Johnson said DPS usually allows about a two-week grace period for students to get their parking permits and become familiar with the different parking lots.

SCHOLARSHIP | Scholarship task force analysis of fiscal situation used to make decision

Continued from Page 1

She said the appeals process is still an option, but the student would have to provide evidence of more extenuating circumstances to receive more than the new percentage amounts.

"But still, there would be some subjectivity in a process like that," Wood said. "Now everyone knows up front, if you have this, this is what you are going to get."

Maria Di Stefano, associate vice president of academic affairs and chair of the scholarship task force, said she is pleased with the results the 15-member committee achieved in a short time period.

"The changes that we suggested and that President Dixon decided to implement, I think that will make a positive impact both on the students as well as how we do the work of the University," Di Stefano said.

She said the task force paid close attention to the University's current fiscal situation in order to ensure the University would be able to afford any changes. Di Stefano said the preparation and analysis performed by the committee helped facilitate a quick decision by President Dixon that could be placed into effect immediately for the fall semester.

"You certainly always need to be guided by dreams, but in this case, if we wanted some things to happen, we needed to make certain that they would be practical and feasible within the current budgetary situation," Di Stefano said.

Dixon said the rest of the issues she gave the scholarship task force will be covered, however, she wants to give the associate vice president of enrollment management time to adjust and work with the committee because he is ultimately responsible for admissions and financial aid. She said she would be meeting within the next few weeks to discuss how the rest of the issues will be covered.

SURCHARGE | New charge will help maintain health and counseling services after cuts

Continued from Page 1

Sophomore JC Scholfield said he agrees the chosen plan is best.

"I think the fact people will have already paid for the service will give people more of an initiative to use the services already at their disposal," he said.

Junior Kyle Torres said he does not think every student should have to pay. He said in the three years he has been at Truman he has never used the Health Center or Counseling Services.

Gilchrist said, however, that the Health Center and Counseling Services also provide educational presentations and keep track of immunization records.

University Counseling Services director Brian Krylowicz said after budget cuts, the fee will allow them to maintain services.

Gilchrist said she is planning to use any excess money to form a student advisory committee this semester to work with the department in deciding how to use it. She said she has had student groups come to her in the past expressing concerns with the Health Center and the committee will be able to assess more carefully how they can meet student needs in an affordable fashion.

The concept of a student health fee is not unique to Truman. Schools throughout Missouri require students to pay a student health fee, and Truman's $25 fee is much less expensive than most schools'. For example, the University of Missouri-Columbia charges a $72.48 student health fee to students enrolled in 12 or more credit hours, the University of Missouri-St. Louis charges $42.20 for the first credit hour and an additional $9.00 for each credit hour up to 12 and the University of Missouri-Rolla charges $75.00 per semester.

Truman's student health fee is not meant to fully support the centers, Gilchrist said. It will go toward covering operating costs, and the excess money will be used toward whatever the advisory board, the Student Senate and the Department of Student Affairs decide. Possibilities include extending Health Center hours or adding more drop-in hours.

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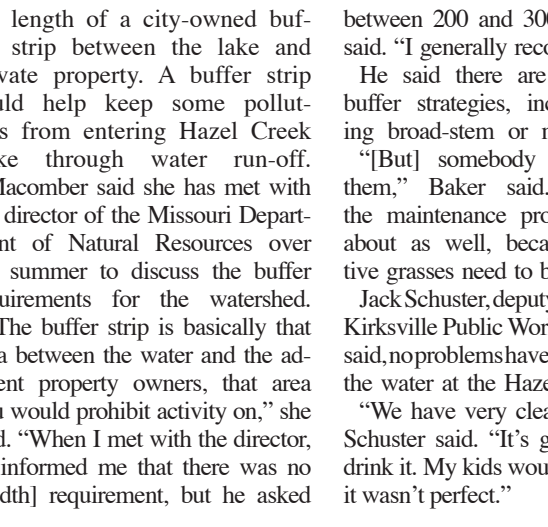

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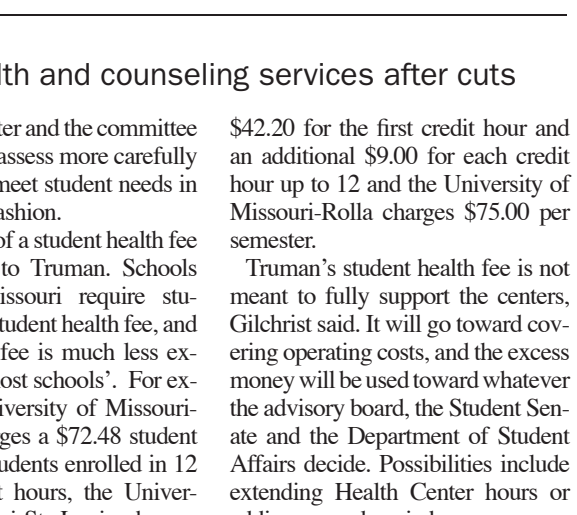

Monday to Thursday 9 a.m. to 11 p.m.
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