

**Graduated from the National Taiwan University College of Law and passed the Law School entrance examination the same year.**

**Came to study in Japan 7 years after beginning work as a lawyer.**

Shinji Chen

Doctoral Course, Graduate School of Law,  
Hokkaido University

1. Why I chose to study abroad in Hokkaido

The reason I chose Hokkaido as the place to study abroad was mainly so I could carry out my research on intellectual property laws under Prof. Yoshiyuki Tamura of the Hokkaido University Graduate School of Law. The Hokkaido University Graduate School of Law is extremely famous in Japan for its research on intellectual property laws.

2. The merits of studying at Hokkaido University

Each term, Hokkaido University holds free Japanese language courses aimed at overseas students, and students can choose a course, such as vocabulary, grammar, conversation or composition, to suite their level of Japanese. So, students whose Japanese language studies were insufficient before coming to Japan can confer with their professor and select classes in which fundamental Japanese can be learnt all day. By doing so, students can save on Japanese language school fees in Japan or other countries.

The city of Sapporo in Hokkaido is the 4th largest metropolis in Japan, but rent and the price of food is cheaper than that in Tokyo and other big cities in Honshu.

Hokkaido has an abundant natural environment, clean air and four distinct seasons. For example, even the same tourist spots looks completely different in spring (cherry blossoms), summer (greenery), autumn (colored leaves) and winter (snow). Hokkaido is so appealing, especially for someone from Taiwan, a sub-tropical region where it doesn't snow. As well as Sapporo and Otaru, there are many other famous man-made and natural attractions in places like Hakodate, Toya, Noboribetsu, Asahikawa, Furano, Tokachi, Kushiro, Akan, Abashiri and Shiretoko, which attract countless visitors from Taiwan every year.

Hokkaido's agriculture, fisheries and dairy farming are developed, providing fresh ingredients every day. Here you can eat the highest-quality rice and ramen, as well as Hokkaido milk and fresh butter, freshly made ice cream with fruit, and various other sweets.

Sapporo Dome in the city is accessible by subway from the city center. It is the home

of Japan's Pacific League baseball team Hokkaido Nippon-Ham Fighters (2012 League Champions), and also hosts concerts by idol groups such as *Arashi*, *AKB48* and *SMAP*.

3. Things I've found to be inconvenient

It begins to snow in November and the snow remains until April. The accumulated snow freezes and people are often falling down. During the severe winter, apart from at the ski slopes, it's difficult to spend long periods of time outdoors.

4. A proposal to those thinking of coming to Japan to study

Hokkaido University is one of the national universities that formed the seven former Imperial Universities, and receives a large amount of financial aid from the government, allowing it to retain sufficient resources in the form of hardware, or libraries and teaching staff. As well as study resources, the natural environment also makes it a magnificent place to study abroad.