Social Life Three: Campus Dining Halls – 社会生活 3 : 学園の食堂

In general, prices are cheaper in the Kansai region than in the Tōkyō area, and food is no exception. Five dollars can get most people a delicious full meal at the dining halls and at many of the restaurants located around Kansai Gaidai. The dining options in and around the main Kansai Gaidai campus are diverse and numerous. Near the campus, there are two bentō 弁当 (boxed-meal) shops, plenty of convenience stores コンビニ and super markets スーパー, a ramen ラーメン shop, and more. The inside of the main Kansai Gaidai Campus has a McDonalds マクドナルド, a Seattle’s Best Coffee シアトルズ・ベスト・コーヒー, another convenience store, and vending machines for ice cream and hot and cold drinks.

Bikkuri Ramen, a favorite destination for exchange students

Lawson is one of many convenience stores around Kansai Gaidai. This store is open until midnight.

The 99 yen shop or “QQ” ( 九 九 ). Notice all the instant noodle cups!
The usual eateries of choice, however, are the three dining halls. All three dining halls have basic amenities available like tea お茶, water 飲み水, steamed white rice ご飯, certain kinds of noodle 麺 dishes, and soft drinks ソーダ (including a Japanese favorite, Melonade, known in America only from the internet sensation Homestar Runner). Napkins are not available anywhere, so either stay clean or remember to bring them (or perhaps a towel or handkerchief) along.

**Dining Hall One 第1食堂** has the most convenient location from the CIE, the largest selection, and the biggest space with around six hundred seats. It is open Monday through Saturday and is the only dining hall open for breakfast and supper. Some kinds of food available here are salads サラダ, miso soup 味噌汁, noodle soups, fried chicken 唐揚げ, pickled vegetables 漬物, pork cutlet rice bowls カツ丼, and chicken-and-egg rice bowls 親子丼. Procedure in Dining Hall One goes like this: Move to the left side near the main entrance and take a tray. Choose food items from refrigerators on either side. Order food like soups, rice, noodles, and rice bowls from staff on either side. Get drinks and ice cream. Proceed to a cashier, paying in cash. (ATMs are located just north of Dining Hall One.) Go forward to obtain utensils, plastic chopsticks, and salad dressings (only in French and Ranch). Exit on the left side (making a circle overall). Separate chopsticks, utensils, and bowls, and put the rest on the conveyer belt.

Fresco is one of a couple supermarkets in the area. In the fall Japanese supermarkets sell delicious persimmon fruit 柿.
Dining Hall Two 第 2 食堂, located above Dining Hall One, is much smaller with only around a hundred seats, and specializes in a couple of noodle and rice dishes. It closes at about 4:00pm every day. After entering, there is a display with many different kinds of food. After deciding what to eat, go to the left and give the attendant the dining selections. Pay, and wait for the workers to prepare the meal. Return dishes to a washing machine on the right side. Be careful to follow directions.

Dining Hall Three 第 3 食堂 is located on the west side of campus. (The main gate is to the south.) With a total of about five hundred seats dispersed on two floors, it mostly has soba そば, ramen ラーメン, and udon うどん noodle dishes. The ordering method in Dining Hall Three involves a special machine. After entering, find the machine on the left hand side and look at the options labeled on an array of buttons. After making a decision, insert change and press the buttons of the desired food. Enter the dining hall and serve yourself water, tea, vegetable dishes, and salads. Give an attendant the item tickets. Pay and wait for the dining staff to prepare the food. The second floor is accessible via elevator or by stairwell at the front left side, next to the ticket machine. After finishing, return dirty dishes to the first floor on a conveyer belt at the back left side.