

JAPANESE

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(Offered within the Department of Asian Studies)

Learning Japanese introduces you to a dynamic nation of 126 million people at the hub of technological innovation, trade, and diplomatic relations in the world's fastest-growing market: the Pacific Rim. It introduces you to a modern country that has maintained a distinct cultural identity; to a society that still emphasizes the individual's responsibilities to family and group; and to an economy with distinctive solutions to problems of productivity, management, and motivation in the work place. It introduces you to the earliest non-Western nation to become a modern world power. St. Olaf teaches four full years of Japanese language and sends language students to three different campuses in Japan.

Overview of the Major

To fulfill a Japanese major, students will demonstrate both linguistic and cultural competence. For linguistic and language skills, Japanese majors will possess proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing at the American Council of Teaching Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Intermediate-Mid level as well as metalinguistic and intercultural awareness of the use of Japanese language in different social milieus.

Additionally, students will be able to analyze, interpret, and critique various discourses and cultural productions from and about Japan through their liberal arts studies, which may include literature, art, history, religion, philosophy, and/or politics.

Intended Learning Outcomes for the Major

Special Programs

Study programs in Japan are available at Waseda University in Tokyo, Nagoya University in Nagoya, and Hokusei Gakuen University in Sapporo. Department faculty also offer January term courses in Japan among other opportunities.

Requirements

Requirements for the Major

Code	Title	Credits
Requirements		
Core Language Courses ¹		
JAPAN 231	Intermediate Japanese I	1.00
JAPAN 232	Intermediate Japanese II	1.00
JAPAN 301	Advanced Japanese I	1.00
JAPAN 302	Advanced Japanese II	1.00
One Language Course Above JAPAN 302 ²		1.00
Four courses, taught in English, focused on Japan/Japanese language and culture ³		4.00
One course must be transnational/regional/global/comparative		
Minimum of one course at the 300-level		

Recommended

LAC course(s), study abroad, internships, or other immersion experiences in Japan. ⁴

Total Credits

9

1

If a student places in a Japanese language course above JAPAN 231 Intermediate Japanese I (e.g., JAPAN 232 Intermediate Japanese II or JAPAN 301 Advanced Japanese I), the student will fulfill the total 9 credits requirement by taking additional upper-level language courses (above JAPAN 302) and/or courses in English that focus on Japan/Japanese language and culture.

If a student begins language study in JAPAN 111 Beginning Japanese I or JAPAN 112 Beginning Japanese II, the student can fulfill the total 9 credits requirement by counting JAPAN 111 and/or JAPAN 112 toward the major and completing one or two fewer courses in English.

2

The following courses currently fulfill this requirement: JAPAN 320 Special Topics in Japanese or the equivalent of a fourth-year-level course taken during the partnered study abroad programs in Japan and/or other approved study abroad language programs.

3

At least one course must examine transnationalism/regionalism/global perspectives or compare Japan/Japanese with other countries/cultures through specific disciplines (e.g. art, religion, literature, history, philosophy, economics, and political science). At least one of these four courses must be 300-level, and no more than one at 100-level. One of these courses can be an Independent Study (Capstone project) or the Asian Studies senior seminars (ASIAN 397 or ASIAN 399). ASCON 110 and ASCON 120 do not count towards the Japanese major.

4

Students earn an Applied Language Certification on their transcripts after successful completion of two LAC (language across the curriculum) courses. LAC courses carry 0.25 credits each (unless offered during January term, when they hold zero credit). Please refer to the Class and Lab for LAC courses

**By completing this major, the student also satisfies the OLE Core Writing in the Major requirement.*

For students double-majoring in Asian Studies and Chinese or Japanese, the following rules apply: JAPAN 231 and JAPAN 232 can count for both the language and area studies majors; one 300-level course taught in English can count for both the language and area studies major; and two level three language courses can count for both the language and area studies major.

Courses

For information about the Asian studies concentration or the Asian studies major, see Asian Studies.

JAPAN 111: Beginning Japanese I

This course is an introduction to speaking, reading, and writing Japanese; writing includes the learning of all syllabic letters (Hiragana and Katakana) and basic Kanji (Chinese characters). Class meets four times weekly. Individual language laboratory visits are also required. Offered annually in the fall semester. Does not count toward Japanese major.

JAPAN 112: *Beginning Japanese II*

This course is an introduction to speaking, reading, and writing Japanese; writing includes the learning of all syllabic letters (Hiragana and Katakana) and basic Kanji (Chinese characters). Class meets four times weekly. Individual language laboratory visits are also required. Offered annually in the spring semester. Does not count toward Japanese major.

Prerequisite: JAPAN 111 or equivalent.

JAPAN 231: *Intermediate Japanese I*

Students continue to develop the listening, speaking, reading and writing skills that enable them to deal not only with topics of daily life, but also cultural themes and authentic materials. Class meets four times weekly. Individual language laboratory visits are also required. Offered annually in the fall semester. Also counts toward Asian studies major and concentration.

Prerequisite: JAPAN 112 or equivalent.

JAPAN 232: *Intermediate Japanese II*

Students continue to develop the listening, speaking, reading and writing skills that enable them to deal not only with topics of daily life, but also cultural themes and authentic materials. Class meets four times weekly. Individual language laboratory visits are also required. Offered annually in the spring semester. Also counts toward Asian studies major and Asian studies and business and management studies concentrations.

Prerequisite: JAPAN 231 or equivalent.

JAPAN 294: *Academic Internship***JAPAN 298: *Independent Study*****JAPAN 301: *Advanced Japanese I***

This third year-level course aims to increase the knowledge of Japanese people, language, and society by comparing with students' own cultures in their target language. Various authentic "texts" (images, video clips, written texts, etc.) support student learning. Offered annually in the fall semester. Also counts toward Asian studies major and Asian studies and business and management studies concentrations.

Prerequisite: JAPAN 232 or equivalent.

JAPAN 302: *Advanced Japanese II*

This course builds on Japanese 301 and aims to increase the knowledge of Japanese people, language, and society by comparing with students' own cultures in their target language. Authentic "texts" (images, video clips, written texts, etc.) support student learning. Offered annually in the spring semester. Also counts toward Asian studies major and Asian studies and business and management studies concentrations.

Prerequisite: JAPAN 301 or equivalent.

JAPAN 320: *Special Topics in Japanese*

In this fourth-year-level Japanese course, students explore a specified topic or theme in language, in various text/media (literature, newspaper, manga, and films), in culture/civilization, or in a combination of these, through close examination of texts (written or visual), discussion, analysis, and interpretation of selected materials. Sample topics include "Best Sellers and Film Adaptations" and "Haiku and the Concept of Nature." May be repeated if topic is different. Taught in Japanese. Also counts toward Asian studies major and concentration.

Prerequisite: JAPAN 302 or equivalent.

JAPAN 394: *Academic Internship***JAPAN 398: *Independent Research***

Courses Focused on Japan/Japanese

ART 260 The Arts of Japan

ASIAN 126 Language in Japanese Society

ASIAN 218 Encountering Japan: Tokyo (study abroad)

ASIAN 224 Page to Screen: Modern Japanese Literature in Film

ASIAN 234 The Body in Japanese Women's Literature (Taught in English)

ASIAN 235 Modern Japanese Literature (Taught in English)

AS/ES 277 Environmental Sustainability in Japan (study abroad)

HIST 253 Modern Japan

Courses Focused on Japan/Japanese with Cross-Cultural/Regional/Global Comparative Perspectives

ASCON 215 Asian Conversations III (study abroad)

ASCON 216 Asian Conversations III (on campus)

ASCON 220 Asian Conversations: Engaging Asia with Voice and Representation

ASIAN 121 Asian Cultures in Comparative Perspectives

ASIAN 123 Asia in America

ASIAN 130 Asian Science Fiction in Global Perspective (English translation)

ASIAN 200 Topics in Asian Studies

ASIAN 230 The Philosophy of Anime

ASIAN 244 Language and Race in Japan and USA

ASIAN 255 Engaging Asia: San Francisco (study away)

ASIAN 268 The Art of Calligraphy: Techniques and Appreciation

ASIAN 282 Second Language Acquisition and Pedagogy in an Asian Context

ASIAN 310 Buddhism through Text and Image

ASIAN 333 What is a Hero?

ASIAN 397 Seminar: Human Rights/Asian Context

ASIAN 399 Seminar for Asian Studies Majors

AS/PS 255 Politics in Asia

AS/RE 256 Religions of China, Korea, and Japan

AS/RE 257 Buddhism

AS/RE 289 Buddhism, Peace and Justice

HIST 240 Methods Seminar: Histories of Africa, Asia, and Latin America (depending on content and instructor)

HIST 345 East Asia Seminar

PHIL 117 Confucius, Buddha, and Socrates

PHIL 127 Zen and the Art of Judo

PHIL 249 Asian Philosophy

PSCI 245 Asian Regionalism

REL 390 History of Religions Seminar (depending on content and instructor)

Plan of Study

Japanese Major - Plan of Study

This is a sample plan that meets the prescribed requirements for this major at St. Olaf. This tool is meant as a guide and does not replace working closely with the student's academic advisor.

This plan is for a student who places into Japanese at St. Olaf at the 111 (first semester) level. Students can major in Japanese whether they start at the beginner level (JAPAN 111) or have prior experience in the language.

Please see the Asian Studies major or Chinese major pages for requirements specific to those majors.

Course	Title	Credits
First Year		
Fall Semester		
FYS 120 or WRIT 120	First-Year Seminar (or Conversation Program - ASCON) or Writing and Rhetoric	1.00
JAPAN 111	Beginning Japanese I	1.00
Credits		2
Spring Semester		
WRIT 120 or FYS 120	Writing and Rhetoric (or Conversation Program - ASCON) or First-Year Seminar	1.00
JAPAN 112	Beginning Japanese II	1.00
Credits		2
Sophomore Year		
Fall Semester		
JAPAN 231	Intermediate Japanese I	1.00
Credits		1
Spring Semester		
JAPAN 232	Intermediate Japanese II	1.00
Credits		1
Junior Year		
Fall Semester		
JAPAN 301	Advanced Japanese I	1.00
Credits		1
Spring Semester		
JAPAN 302	Advanced Japanese II	1.00
Credits		1

Senior Year

Fall Semester

JAPAN 320	Special Topics in Japanese (or language course above JAPAN 302)	1.00
Credits		1
Total Credits		9

Students must successfully complete the equivalent of 35 St. Olaf credits through a combination of full-credit and fractional-credit courses to earn the Bachelor of Arts.

Visit the Japanese program webpage for more information.

Faculty

Program Director, 2024-2025

Joanne Quimby

Associate Professor of Asian Studies
modern Japanese literature, feminist literary theory, gender and sexuality studies, Japanese film cultural studies, Japanese language

Hiroe Akimoto

Instructor of Asian Studies
Japanese language instruction

Rika Ito

Professor of Asian Studies
sociolinguistics; language ideology, language in media; Japanese