Today's students find themselves in a world of increasingly multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multicultural contexts. Through a long history of receiving, reworking, and incorporating influences from nearby cultural centers on the Asian mainland and surrounding Pacific islands and from the world beyond, including Europe and the Americas, Japan has developed a tradition of multiculturalism—a tradition that is best understood through interdisciplinary study. Following this thread, the Japanese Studies Program seeks to foster the student's global and interdisciplinary perspectives, while at the same time maintaining a flexibility that allows individuals to pursue their own areas of interest. To further foster the students' linguistic and cultural development, the Japanese Studies Program strongly encourages study abroad in Japan for a year, a semester, or a summer.

Students may pursue a major or a minor in Japanese studies. The program offers a variety of courses to fulfill the requirements, ranging from five levels of the Japanese language to courses about Japanese cinema, literature, and pop culture. Besides these core courses, we encourage the student to take related courses in such interdisciplinary areas as Asian art, cinema, comparative literature of Japan and the West, Japanese religion and history, and international business. Taking advantage of the varied resources of the university and University Circle institutions, the Japanese Studies Program makes the study of Japanese culture an integral part of the student's undergraduate education. Furthermore, the Japanese Studies Program provides an excellent foundation for graduate or professional school or for careers in international business and finance, careers involving technological or medical exchange, and careers in law, journalism, foreign service, or the arts.

Program Faculty

Takao Hagiwara, PhD
(University of British Columbia)
Associate Professor, Department of Modern Languages and Literatures; Director, Japanese Studies Program
Modern Japanese literature

Beth M. Carter, PhD
(University of Pennsylvania)
Assistant Professor, Department of Modern Languages and Literatures
Premodern Japanese literature

Margaret M. Fitzgerald, MA
(Ohio State University)
Lecturer, Department of Modern Languages and Literatures
Japanese linguistics

Yoshiko Kishi, MA
(New York University)
Lecturer, Department of Modern Languages and Literatures
Japanese pedagogy

Undergraduate Program

Major

The BA major in Japanese studies requires a minimum of 35 credit hours. For students beginning the major at the 200 level, the course requirements are as follows:

- JAPN 201 Intermediate Japanese I 4
- JAPN 202 Intermediate Japanese II 4
- JAPN 301 Advanced Japanese I 4
- JAPN 302 Advanced Japanese II 4
- JAPN 350 Contemporary Japanese Texts I 3
- or JAPN 450 Japanese in Cultural Context I
- JAPN 351 Contemporary Japanese Texts II 3
- or JAPN 451 Japanese in Cultural Context II
- JAPN 397 Senior Thesis I 3
- JAPN 398 Senior Thesis II 3

Four Asian studies, world literature, or other related courses 12

Total Units 40

* JAPN 450/451, if not taken as replacement(s) for JAPN 350/351, can be counted toward the four Asian studies, world literature, or other related courses.

** This course requires a substantial research paper in Japanese or English. Students are required to identify their faculty advisors and the topic of their paper by the end of the junior year. Exceptional papers may be considered for honors.

*** "Other related courses" may include courses in Japanese literature, film, theater, art history, anthropology, philosophy, religion, sociology, political science, or history. Permission of Japanese Studies advisor required.

Students beginning the major at the 300 level do not take JAPN 201 Intermediate Japanese I and JAPN 202 Intermediate Japanese II, but do take one “directed reading” in Japanese in an area related to their major research. All other requirements for the BA are the same.

Courses in other disciplines also form an important component of the Japanese Studies Program. They provide an international, as well as interdisciplinary, perspective on Japanese culture. A faculty advisor supervises each student’s selection of these courses.

In addition to the courses required for the major, the following courses are offered in the Japanese Studies Program:

- JAPN 215 The World of Manga 3
- JAPN/WLIT 225 Japanese Popular Culture 3
- JAPN 235 The Japan Experience: Kyoto 3
- JAPN/WLIT 245 Classical Japanese Literature in Translation 3
- JAPN/WLIT 255 Modern Japanese Literature in Translation 3
- JAPN/WLIT 345 Japanese Women Writers 3
- JAPN/WLIT 355 Modern Japanese Novels and the West 3
- JAPN 399 Independent Study 1-3
The writing system. Recommended preparation: JAPN 201 or equivalent.

Control of the fundamentals of modern Japanese and a firm foundation in characters. With the completion of JAPN 201 - 202, students should have

JAPN 202. Intermediate Japanese II. 4 Units.

Requirement.

JAPN 102 or equivalent. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity

learn approximately 100 new characters. Recommended preparation:

aural comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing abilities and

Further study of fundamental structures of Japanese. Students improve

JAPN 201. Intermediate Japanese I. 4 Units.

Continuation of JAPN 101. Emphasizes aural comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing. Students learn approximately 100 new kanji


JAPN 201. Intermediate Japanese I. 4 Units.

Further study of fundamental structures of Japanese. Students improve aural comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing abilities and learn approximately 100 new characters. Recommended preparation: JAPN 102 or equivalent. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

JAPN 202. Intermediate Japanese II. 4 Units.

Continuation of JAPN 201. Students learn an additional 100 kanji characters. With the completion of JAPN 201 - 202, students should have control of the fundamentals of modern Japanese and a firm foundation in the writing system. Recommended preparation: JAPN 201 or equivalent. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

JAPN 202. Intermediate Japanese II. 4 Units.

Continuation of JAPN 201. Students learn an additional 100 kanji characters. With the completion of JAPN 201 - 202, students should have control of the fundamentals of modern Japanese and a firm foundation in the writing system. Recommended preparation: JAPN 201 or equivalent. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

JAPN 202. Intermediate Japanese II. 4 Units.

Continuation of JAPN 201. Students learn an additional 100 kanji characters. With the completion of JAPN 201 - 202, students should have control of the fundamentals of modern Japanese and a firm foundation in the writing system. Recommended preparation: JAPN 201 or equivalent. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

JAPN 215. The World of Manga. 3 Units.

Manga (comic books and graphic novels) is one of the most important aspects of contemporary visual culture in Japan. It is consumed by millions of Japanese every day, and has attracted intense attention around the world. As it constitutes one third of the annual publications in Japan today, its breadth and scope are limitless. What does manga reveal about contemporary cultural production and consumption in Japan? What kind of special features are used in manga to attract people so much? What kind of genres do they have and what kind of readers do they have? These are some of the questions we will explore by surveying a large number of works produced in the last fifty years. Introducing graphic novels by major artists and writers, the course will expand your understanding of key components, social movements and discourses associated with manga. You will examine the history of manga, its aesthetics, and social impact through assigned readings, including scholarly papers and manga books, as well as works selected by each student (in original Japanese or in English translation).

JAPN 225. Japanese Popular Culture. 3 Units.

This course highlights salient aspects of modern Japanese popular culture as expressed in animation, comics and literature. The works examined include films by Hayao Miyazaki, writings by Kenji Miyazawa, Haruki Murakami and Banana Yoshimoto, among others. The course introduces students to essential aspects of modern Japanese popular culture and sensibility. Offered as JAPN 225 and WLIT 225. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

JAPN 235. The Japan Experience: Kyoto. 3 Units.

This is a 200-level Japanese language course including a trip to Kyoto, where students study Japanese with three major learning components: "Japanese Language classes," "Kyoto Exploration Project," and "Exchanges with local college students." The course will consist of 10 classes before the trip focused on preparation and language learning followed by 15 days in Kyoto. Japanese Language Classes: Language classes before the trip to Japan focusing on listening, speaking, reading and writing will be provided. The students will learn necessary expressions and strategies for communication in Japanese during the trip. Survival Japanese classes will be provided during the first few days after arrival in Japan. In those classes, students will learn expressions and information focusing on real-world situations and practical tasks in the classroom. Then they will explore the local neighborhood (e.g. convenience store, drug store, library, etc.) and complete tasks that test their comprehension/proficiency in practice. Exchanges with Local College Students: Students from CWRU will be able to take advantage of Ritsumeikan University's "Buddies" program where Japanese student volunteers are paired with participants to improve conversational skills and become better acquainted with the campus and Kyoto. CWRU students will also visit classes at a local college in Osaka for exchanges with students there. These exchanges will allow participants to reinforce their language skills, develop better communication skills, and deepen cultural understanding in both classroom and real-life settings. Japan Exploration Project: Students will complete individual projects during the course. They will design their own projects using resources available in Kyoto before the trip and prepare for it. Project themes will be chosen by students based on their interests. At the end of course, students will give presentations in Japanese, demonstrating their language proficiency development. Cultural Experiences: To get several cultural activities will be organized: Zen meditation, tea ceremony, Japanese cooking class etc. The tea ceremony activity will include a rare opportunity for students to meet a tea ceremony master, Shiou Tsukuda, and experience the way of traditional tea. Prereq: JAPN 102.
JAPN 245. Classical Japanese Literature in Translation. 3 Units.
Readings, in English translation, of classical Japanese poetry, essays, narratives, and drama to illustrate essential aspects of Japanese culture and sensibility before the Meiji Restoration (1868). Lectures explore the sociohistorical contexts and the character of major literary genres; discussions focus on interpreting the central images of human value within each period. Japanese sensibilities compared to and contrasted with those of Western and other cultures. Offered as JAPN 245 and WLIT 245. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

JAPN 255. Modern Japanese Literature in Translation. 3 Units.
Focus on the major genres of modern Japanese literature, including poetry, short story, and novel (shōsetsu). No knowledge of Japanese language or history is assumed. Lectures, readings, and discussions are in English. Films and slides complement course readings. Offered as JAPN 255 and WLIT 255. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

JAPN 301. Advanced Japanese I. 4 Units.

JAPN 302. Advanced Japanese II. 4 Units.
Continuation of JAPN 301; emphasizes conversational proficiency and reading. Recommended preparation: JAPN 301 or equivalent. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

JAPN 335. Japanese Linguistics. 3 Units.
The purpose of this course is to survey the principal research in Japanese linguistics for students who have basic knowledge of Japanese and are interested in more in-depth treatment of linguistic phenomena (phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, etc.). Lectures and discussions will cover many different aspects of the Japanese language. There is a great deal of analytic studies of the Japanese language done both inside and outside Japan, which will be surveyed in this course. Students will become familiar with the major issues through lectures and class discussions, as well as through their reading of both primary and secondary sources. Both formal and functional approaches to the analysis of Japanese will be examined, and the acquisition of these structures will also be discussed. The course will also be useful for the improvement of students’ Japanese language proficiency. Recommended preparation: JAPN 101 and JAPN 102, or equivalent competence in Japanese. Offered as COGS 335, COGS 435, JAPN 435, LING 335 and LING 435. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

JAPN 345. Japanese Women Writers. 3 Units.
Contributions of women writers to the literature of pre-modern and modern Japan; investigations of how their works exemplify and diverge from "mainstream" literary practices. Emphasis on the social and cultural contexts of the texts. Offered as JAPN 345 and WLIT 345. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

JAPN 350. Contemporary Japanese Texts I. 3 Units.
The primary aim of this course is to develop communication skills in Japanese based on those that the students have acquired in JAPN 302 or equivalent. The students will read and discuss various texts such as daily conversations, essays, and news scripts with the assistance of vocabulary and kanji (Chinese character) lists and formal grammar explanations. Attention also will be given to enhancing the students’ writing and aural/oral proficiencies through regularly assigned homework, presentations, tape listening, video viewing, and classroom discussion. Recommended preparation: JAPN 302 or equivalent. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.

JAPN 351. Contemporary Japanese Texts II. 3 Units.
This course is a continuation of JAPN 350 and its primary aim overlaps with that of JAPN 350: to develop more sophisticated communication skills in Japanese. Students will read and discuss various texts such as daily conversations, essays, and news scripts largely with the assistance of vocabulary and kanji (Chinese character) lists. Attention will be given to enhancing the students’ writing and aural/oral proficiencies through regularly assigned homework, presentations, tape listening, video viewing, and classrooms discussion. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement. Prereq: JAPN 350 or consent of instructor.

JAPN 355. Modern Japanese Novels and the West. 3 Units.
This course will compare modern Japanese and Western novels, drama, and novels. Comparisons will focus on the themes of family gender and alienation, which subsume a number of interrelated sub-themes such as marriage, home, human sexuality, amae (dependence), innocence, experience, death, God/gods, and nature (the ecosystem). Offered as JAPN 355 and WLIT 355. Counts as SAGES Departmental Seminar. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement. 

JAPN 396. Senior Capstone - Japanese. 3 Units.
The Senior Capstone in Japanese is an independent study project chosen in consultation with a capstone advisor. The capstone project should reflect both the student’s interest within Japanese and the courses he or she has taken to fulfill the major. The project requires independent research using an approved bibliography and plan of action. In addition to written research, the student will also present the capstone project in a public forum that is agreed upon by the project advisor and the student. Counts as SAGES Senior Capstone. Prereq: Senior status required. Major in Japanese required.

JAPN 397. Senior Thesis I. 3 Units.
Intensive study of a literary, linguistic, or cultural topic with a faculty member, leading to the writing of a research paper in English or Japanese. Limited to senior majors. Permit required.

JAPN 398. Senior Thesis II. 3 Units.
Continuation of JAPN 397. Limited to senior majors. Prereq: JAPN 397.

JAPN 399. Independent Study. 1 - 3 Units.
Directed study for students who have progressed beyond available course offerings.

JAPN 435. Japanese Linguistics. 3 Units.
The purpose of this course is to survey the principal research in Japanese linguistics for students who have basic knowledge of Japanese and are interested in more in-depth treatment of linguistic phenomena (phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, etc.). Lectures and discussions will cover many different aspects of the Japanese language. There is a great deal of analytic studies of the Japanese language done both inside and outside Japan, which will be surveyed in this course. Students will become familiar with the major issues through lectures and class discussions, as well as through their reading of both primary and secondary sources. Both formal and functional approaches to the analysis of Japanese will be examined, and the acquisition of these structures will also be discussed. The course will also be useful for the improvement of students’ Japanese language proficiency. Recommended preparation: JAPN 101 and JAPN 102, or equivalent competence in Japanese. Offered as COGS 335, COGS 435, JAPN 435, LING 335 and LING 435. Counts for CAS Global & Cultural Diversity Requirement.
JAPN 450. Japanese in Cultural Context I. 3 Units.
The primary aim of this graduate course is to develop sophisticated communication skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in Japanese. The students will read and discuss various texts in the original, such as essays, news scripts, and literary works. Classroom instruction and discussion will be conducted in Japanese. The students also will be required to write a research paper of 4000-6000 letters/characters (10-15 genkoyoshi pages) in Japanese on a topic related to Japan and the student's specialty. Recommended preparation: JAPN 351 or equivalent.

JAPN 451. Japanese in Cultural Context II. 3 Units.
This course is a continuation of JAPN 450 and it aims at a further development of sophisticated communication skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in Japanese. The students will read and discuss various texts in the original, such as essays, news scripts, and literary works both classical and modern. Classroom instruction and discussion will be conducted in Japanese. The students also will be required to write a research paper of 6000-8000 letters/characters (15-20 genkoyoshi pages) in Japanese on a topic related to Japan and the student's specialty. Recommended preparation: JAPN 450 or equivalent.