

JAPANESE LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE —HONORS OPPORTUNITIES—

Japanese—one of the most fascinating and challenging of languages—is the key to a dynamic culture, an extraordinarily rich literature, and the world’s third - largest economy. The Japanese program at ASU consists of about one hundred undergraduate majors, many non-majors, and a growing number of MA students working closely with a skilled and dedicated faculty of specialists in language, literature, and culture. Our majors also take courses on Japan offered by a number of other departments. Alumni of the Japanese program are applying their knowledge of Japanese language and culture to careers in business, education, government, law, medicine, publishing, and many other fields.

ADVISING

Barrett Honors College students majoring in Japanese, or considering a Japanese major, should meet as soon as possible with one of the undergraduate academic advising specialists in the School of International Letters and Cultures (SILC), Languages and Literatures Building, room 440 (480-965-6281); **and** with the honors faculty advisor for Japanese, Koji Tanno (ktanno@asu.edu; L&L room 415D).

The Japanese program has several distinctive aspects that majors and prospective majors should keep in mind.

1. Many students find it particularly exciting to study a non-Western language with a non-alphabetic writing system, precisely because such languages are different from what most of us are used to, and because they are challenging. Learning Japanese is very hard work, and very rewarding. Learning to read and write Japanese deepens a student’s understanding of the spoken language, and gives the student access to a huge body of literature and other writings on every conceivable subject.
2. We strongly encourage our majors spend a summer or—even better—a year studying in Japan at universities with which ASU has exchange agreements. Nothing can take the place of an extended, first-hand experience of Japanese culture in a Japanese-language environment. Graduation requirements are complicated for all students, however, and particularly so for those who study abroad. It’s essential that you meet regularly with a SILC advisor and with Koji Tanno to check and double-check requirements, course availability, and ASU credit for courses taken abroad. If you’re planning to study abroad, meet with them *before* you go and keep in touch while you’re in Japan. Of course it’s also essential that you maintain close contact with your advisors at the Barrett Honors College.
3. Students majoring in Japanese are required also to take at least six hours of course work in Chinese or Korean language and/or culture, in order to gain insight into the place of Japanese culture and language in East Asian civilization.

4. Entering freshmen who major in Japanese (or any other SILC language) are required to take SLC 201, Introduction to Linguistics, and SLC 202, Introduction to Literary/Cultural Theory, normally in the sophomore year; See a SILC advisor for more information.

Honors Enrichment Contracts

Courses available for Honors Enrichment Contracts may include:

JPN 301, 302, Third-Year Japanese I and II
JPN 401, Reading Modern Japanese Texts
JPN 445, Readings in Modern Japanese
JPN 485, Problems of Translation
JPN 394, 494, Special Topics
SLC 421, Japanese Literature in Translation
Selected graduate courses, as appropriate.

See the course instructor and Koji Tanno for details.

THESIS

Barrett Honors College students majoring in Japanese should take SLC421 (Japanese Literature in Translation) or JPN401 (Reading Modern Japanese Texts), or preferably both, before the end of the junior year, particularly if they contemplate writing a thesis on a literary topic. If you wish to write a thesis on a linguistic topic, you should take one 300 or 400 level linguistic course, most preferably JPN394 or 494 on Japanese Linguistics. Many students use part of their time in Japan to find a topic for an honors thesis and begin to gather ideas and material there. Whether you study in Japan or not, you should discuss possible thesis topics with Koji Tanno by the spring semester of your junior year; he will help you arrive at a manageable topic and identify faculty members who best match your research interests. Theses in Japanese Language and Literature are of two types: research on a topic in Japanese linguistics or literature, and literary translation. A translation thesis typically consists of an English translation of a Japanese literary text, accompanied by a critical/analytical study of the text; this may be done in conjunction with JPN485, Problems of Translation, if the course is offered during the student's junior or senior year. While working on the thesis project students may register for JPN492; while writing the thesis, students must register for JPN493. Completing a thesis, whether in research or in translation, greatly strengthens a student's appeal to graduate schools and employers.

Per Barrett requirements, all students must complete a thesis preparation workshop before they can register for JPN 492. For more information on this requirement, see:

<https://barretthonors.asu.edu/academics/thesis-and-creative-project/getting-started>