Admissions for Transfer Students
Preparing and Applying for the Major

Welcome to the Department of Asian Languages and Literature! We are glad that you are considering transferring to our department. While our language requirements can sometimes make transferring difficult, we have many transfer students who were very successful in this department.

Before You Apply to UW

In terms of preparation before coming to UW, we recommend that transfer students complete at least two years of language courses in the desired major prior to admission to UW. (However, this is not required, especially for languages like Korean that are seldom taught at smaller institutions.) Students can match course numbers on the planning worksheets to those from Washington State community or technical colleges with the UW Transfer Equivalency Guide. (Students from outside of Washington state should contact an Asian Languages and Literature adviser (asianadv@uw.edu) with questions about course equivalency for major or minor requirements.

Prospective transfer students at any stage of the planning or application process are invited to contact an Asian Languages and Literature adviser at either asianadv@uw.edu or asianapp@uw.edu. Students can consult with the adviser about their individual academic planning prior to admission, and are invited to visit the campus for in-person advising appointments, which can also be scheduled here. Schedule a visit to campus around one of the weekly Transfer Thursday events to get general information about the transfer admission process. For additional resources about transferring to the UW, please explore the Transfer Portal.

Before You Apply to the Major

We recommend that prospective transfer students focus first on taking some General Education and Areas of Knowledge classes. Students in the College of Arts and Sciences (where AL&L is housed) must complete at least 90 credits outside of the major department, so you will likely have plenty of credits to play with! Most of our majors require between 50-75 credits to complete. In order to enter the language majors (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, South Asian), you will need to have taken at least one language class at UW with a grade of 2.5 or higher, and also one intensive writing class (W credit class) with a grade of 2.5 or higher. If you haven’t already done so, focus on getting those classes done first. If you’re interested in our Asian Languages and Culture major, you don’t need to complete any requirements before applying -- you can go ahead and meet with an adviser at any time to declare the major!

Transfer Student FAQ

- How do I fill out the UW application if I want to major in Japanese, Korean, Chinese, South Asian, or Asian Languages and Culture?

AL&L is located within the Humanities Division of the College of Arts & Sciences. You may choose one of our majors as an option when you apply, but it is not required.
Do I need to fill out a separate application to be admitted to one of the Asian Languages and Literature majors?

No, you do not need to fill out an application to be admitted to one of our majors. However, you will need to meet the basic admission requirements and then meet with an adviser. You cannot enroll in AL&L majors before being admitted to UW. In fact, one of our requirements is taking at least one 5 credit language class at UW, with a grade of 2.5 or higher, before enrolling in the major.

How do I register for language courses in Asian L&L? It says I don't have the pre-requisites, even though I took language classes at community college! Or: I need an entry code!

All transfer students who took language classes in a previous institution (high school, community college, previous four-year college, etc.) will need to have a placement interview in order to be placed at the appropriate language class level. For example, if you took Japanese at Bellevue College through the second year, you would still need to have a placement interview before registering for language classes. If you took AP Chinese in high school, you would need to have a placement interview before you can register for Chinese classes. Because your transfer language classes will be transferred as a generic course (e.g. JAPAN 1XX, KOREAN 2XX, etc.), you will need an entry code to override the pre-requisite requirement. After you are placed appropriately through an interview, the instructor will provide you with an entry code. You can find out the specific details here.

My transfer language courses all transferred as 1XX/2XX, etc. Do they still apply towards the major?!

Yes, these classes will usually apply towards the major (note that 1XX classes do not apply directly—only classes 2 year and above.) However, as mentioned in the previous question, they do not guarantee placement in a specific year or class at UW. You will need to have a placement interview and receive an entry code to register for language classes.

How long will it take to complete a BA with one of the majors in the department of Asian Languages and Literature at UW?

Most majors in our department required between 50-75 credits. A large portion of these will come from language classes. If students enter a language major (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, South Asian) without any prior coursework or knowledge of the language, 3-4 years of language classes will be required (30-45 credits). Note that the first year of any language class does not count towards credits for the major). However, students can sometimes make up time by taking intensive classes over the summer. For example, if a transfer student began the Korean major without any prior coursework in or knowledge of Korean, they would be able to take first year Korean (15 credits) their first year, intensive second year Korean over the summer (15 credits), and then third year Korean the following year. In this way, a transfer student could shorten the required time to complete the major. Students can also shorten the time-to-major by taking a large number of language credits while studying abroad.

I have more than 90 credits from my community college. How many of these credits will count toward my degree?

“The UW allows a maximum of 90 credits of lower-division transfer coursework to be applied toward a UW degree. Of the 180 credits required for graduation from the UW (some majors require more than 180), a maximum of 90 lower-division transfer credits are allowed. Once you are enrolled at the UW, if your lower-division credit exceeds 90, there will be a difference between the “total credits earned” and the “total credits allowed” under the Summary of Transfer Credit following the Detail of Transfer Credit.

Additionally, a maximum of 135 total transfer credits are allowed toward the 180 credit total. The University-wide residence requirement states that 45 of the last 60 credits must be taken “in residence” while enrolled as a matriculated student. Therefore, a student transferring 135 or more credits must complete a minimum of 45 more credits in residence at the UW.” (Excerpted from here: https://admit.washington.edu/apply/transfer/policies/)

In other words, theoretically, you could use up to 135 of your total transfer credits towards a degree. However, you would have to take
at least 45 credits (usually 3 quarters) at UW, for a total of 180. This would only be the case, however, if you had upper division classes (such as a third or fourth year Japanese class, for example.)

- In addition to my regular course work for the major, what other opportunities are available for AL&L transfer students?

Transfer students have a variety of options in AL&L. Although Study Abroad can sometimes be more challenging to fit in a transfer student schedule, it is certainly not impossible. Many transfer students go abroad between their first and second year at UW. The UW Study Abroad Office offers a variety of programs in Japan, China, Korea, and more. In addition, transfer students with advanced language abilities have the option of taking ASIAN 491, a language teaching internship. Click here to learn more about this career option. Finally, there are a large variety of extracurricular activities available, from participating in FIUTS to joining the Korean Singing Club or the Japanese Tadoku Reading Club.

- What do I do with an AL&L major and how do I prepare for a career using this degree?

AL&L majors go on to a wide variety of different careers. Some go onto graduate school, some look for work in translation or interpretation, and some work in businesses. Our classes prepare students to become ‘culturally competent.’ Cultural competence is the ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures, and is highly valued by employers, particularly those with global businesses—as with many companies in Seattle! You can find some additional career planning information here. We also strongly suggest that transfer students take the opportunity to visit the Career and Internship Center early and often. There are even workshops and classes offered specifically for transfer students.

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