Japanese Language Study

Studying Japanese Language at UW

Our language program offers courses at instructional levels from beginning to advanced, including a wide variety of high-intermediate and advanced courses that build on skills from the first three years of instruction. For information on placement tests, click here.

Beginning through Intermediate Japanese

We offer three years of sequenced, 4-skills language instruction that each run in a series from Fall to Spring each year. These courses are taught in Japanese with some English used for grammar and cultural explanations as needed, depending on the level of the course.

Textbooks:
- Japan 101-2-3: Genki 1
- Japan 201-2-3: Genki 2
- Japan 301-2-3: Tobira, through Chapter 9

For summer intensive course offerings, see the UW Summer Quarter catalog (https://www.summer.uw.edu).

High Intermediate and Advanced Courses

Students can take any combination of 400-level language courses that suit their interests and level. "Fourth-Year" courses have a prerequisite of Japan 303, 313, or 334. "Fifth-Year" courses expect a higher level of accomplishment, generally completion of three "Fourth-Year" courses or higher skills developed through individual study, study abroad or home language use.

Fourth-Year Japanese: Japan 401, 402 and 403 are high-intermediate 4-skills language courses. The materials used include the final chapters of Tobira and additional Japanese media and readings. Though these courses build on one another, it is possible to start at any point in the series. Each has a prerequisite of Japan 303, 313, or 334. These courses are taught in Japanese.

Fourth-Year Japanese through Contemporary Media: Japan 411, 412, 413, and 418 are high-intermediate 4-skills language courses that use Japanese media and include some learner self-pacing to suit the diversity of levels of students interested in 400-level Japanese courses. Course titles are Japan 411 "Practical Communication Through Japanese TV Dramas"; Japan 412 "Virtual Tokyo"; Japan 413 "Japanese Through Movies" and Japan 418 "Japanese through Content". These courses are not more advanced than Japan 401-402-403, but include more individualization of materials to suit student interests and needs. The prerequisite for each of these courses is Japan 303, 313, or 334. These courses are taught in Japanese.

Fourth-Year Reading Courses: The focus and content of Readings in Modern Japanese (Japan 431, 432, and 433) varies depending on the instructor, and is usually literature, but may be narrative non-fiction texts (contact the instructor for further information). Classical Japanese courses teach foundations of classical Japanese grammar (Japan 471), which serves as a prerequisite for a reading course (Japan 472). Prerequisites are Japan 303, 313, or 334. Japan 472 has a prerequisite of Japan 471. These classes are taught in English.
Fifth-Year Japanese: Japan 451, 452, 453 are entitled “Fifth-year Japanese I” (Japan 451), “Project Work in Advanced Japanese” (Japan 452), and “Fifth-year Japanese III” (Japan 453). These courses offer a higher level of study for advanced students. For placement or further information, contact Nishikawa-sensei (inis@uw.edu) for Japan 451 and 453 or Takeda-sensei (fumikot@uw.edu) for Japan 452. These courses are taught in Japanese.

Summer Intensive Language Courses
We offer summer intensive courses that cover, in 9 weeks, an entire year (15 credits) of Japanese. The materials used are the same as those used in the same-level Academic year courses. See the UW Summer Quarter catalog for offerings. You can also speak with an undergraduate advisor at the HAS (Humanities Academic Services Center) about your language background and interests in order to explore if summer intensive courses are a good fit for you. If you are working on summer plans prior to the release of the UW Summer Quarter catalog, the HAS may have further information.

Add a Japanese Major or Minor
Count your Japanese language credits toward our Japanese Major and Minor, or Asian Languages and Cultures Major and Minor. These programs combine language and culture (literature, linguistics, culture) courses taught in English with language courses taught in Japanese. To decide between these options, it helps to consider the courses you’d like to take, and your intended graduation date. See our academic counselors for support in planning for one of our majors or minors.

Study Abroad
UW Study Abroad offers over 30 different study opportunities at universities throughout Japan. UW Study Abroad courses count toward UW degree requirements. When you return from study abroad, you can continue studying Japanese here at UW.

Non-Degree Study
Non-UW students are welcome to enroll in our Japanese language (including language classes) through UW Extension, on a space-available basis. First-year Japanese usually fills to capacity so cannot be taken by non-degree students, but there is sometimes space for non-degree students in Japan 202 and higher-level courses. To find out more, email or speak with the instructor of the course you are interested and go to http://nondegree.washington.edu/ for non-degree enrollment information. The cost to enroll in a five-credit course for one quarter is about $1,800.

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