

# JAPANESE, B.A.

**Begin Campus:** Any Penn State Campus

**End Campus:** University Park

## Program Description

The major in Japanese strengthens students' overall skills in internationalism and provides a focus on one of the world's most important nations. The Japanese major is designed for students who want to develop proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing Japanese, and acquire profound knowledge of Japanese culture, history, and civilization in the context of East Asia.

The Japanese major requires students to study abroad in order to deepen their understanding of the language, culture and contemporary society, and to develop intercultural and comparative perspectives.

The major can also help students prepare for graduate study in Japan-related fields and professional careers where proficiency in Japanese is required, such as government services, or multinational companies.

Students planning to teach in public schools should schedule the appropriate courses leading to certification in consultation with an adviser in the College of Education.

## What is Japanese?

The Japanese program provides students with an opportunity to concentrate on acquiring expertise in an important modern language and its culture. Giving students a strong working knowledge of the Japanese language and understanding of Japanese culture, the program can help prepare students for work in contexts where the language and culture are pertinent, to live and work in Japan as informed and capable individuals equipped with appropriate intercultural skills and awareness, or for graduate study in Japan-related fields. Graduates may work in government service, domestic and foreign offices, or international agencies. Many go on to teach English in Japan or to do translation work. Employment may also be available with trade organizations, international banking houses, or U.S. companies abroad. Domestic and multinational companies are increasingly seeking employees with backgrounds in multicultural studies as a way of dealing with the global market.

## You Might Like This Program If...

- You are interested in Japanese language, culture, history, or society.
- You want to live or work in Japan.
- You are aiming for a career involving travel to Japan and interaction with native speakers of Japanese.

## Entrance to Major

In order to be eligible for entrance to this major, a student must:

1. attain at least a C (2.00) cumulative grade-point average for all courses taken at the University; and
2. have at least third-semester classification (<https://www.registrar.psu.edu/enrollment/semester-classification.cfm>).

READ SENATE POLICY 37-30: ENTRANCE TO AND CHANGES IN MAJOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/37-00-entrance-to-a-college-or-major/>)

## Degree Requirements

For the Bachelor of Arts degree in Japanese, a minimum of 124 credits is required:

Requirement	Credits
General Education	45
Electives	20-26
Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements	24
Requirements for the Major	35

**0-6 of the 45 credits for General Education are included in the Requirements for the Major. This includes 0-6 credits of GA, GH, or GS courses.**

**3 of the 24 credits for Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements are included in the Requirements for the Major, General Education, or Electives and 0-12 credits are included in Electives if world language proficiency is demonstrated by examination.**

Per Senate Policy 83-80.5, the college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of coursework in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

## Requirements for the Major

At least 21 credits must be at the 400 level.

Students are strongly encouraged to take at least 12 of their credits in Japan, either in a Penn State Education Abroad program or another program subject to departmental approval. For curricular sequencing, the program encourages students to pursue this Education Abroad experience in the fall semester of the junior year, unless the host institution runs on the Japanese academic schedule, in which case study abroad should be in the spring semester, or for the entire year.

A grade of C or better is required for all courses in the major. To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn at least a C grade in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44 (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/>).

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Prescribed Courses</b>		
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
JAPNS 110	Level Two Japanese B	4
JAPNS 401	Level Three Japanese A	4
JAPNS 402	Level Three Japanese B	4
JAPNS 403Y	Level Four Japanese A	4
JAPNS 404	Level Four Japanese B	4
<b>Additional Courses</b>		
<i>Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
Select 3 credits from the following:		3
JAPNS 120	Japanese Literature in Its Cultural Context	
JAPNS 121N	Japanese Film and New Media	
JAPNS 122	Gods to Godzilla: A Survey of Japanese Culture	
Select 3 credits from the JAPNS 430-439 level		3
Select 3 credits from the JAPNS 450-459 level		3

### Supporting Courses and Related Areas

*Supporting Courses and Related Areas: Require a grade of C or better*

Select 6 credits pertaining to Japan, such as courses in art history, comparative history, geography, history, Japanese, philosophy, political science, religious studies, theatre arts, or other fields, selected from departmental list

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## General Education

Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/>) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

### Foundations (grade of C or better is required and Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Quantification (GQ):** 6 credits
- **Writing and Speaking (GWS):** 9 credits

### Breadth in the Knowledge Domains (Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Arts (GA):** 3 credits
- **Health and Wellness (GHW):** 3 credits
- **Humanities (GH):** 3 credits
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS):** 3 credits
- **Natural Sciences (GN):** 3 credits

### Integrative Studies

- **Inter-Domain Courses (Inter-Domain):** 6 credits

### Exploration

- **GN**, may be completed with Inter-Domain courses: 3 credits
- **GA, GH, GN, GS, Inter-Domain courses.** This may include 3 credits of World Language course work beyond the 12th credit level or the requirements for the student's degree program, whichever is higher: 6 credits

## University Degree Requirements

### First Year Engagement

All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3 credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their academic adviser for these requirements.

## Cultures Requirement

6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements

- United States Cultures: 3 credits
- International Cultures: 3 credits

## Writing Across the Curriculum

3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

## Total Minimum Credits

A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

## Quality of Work

Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

## Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition

The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/>)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

## B.A. Degree Requirements

**World Language** (0-12 credits): Student must attain 12th credit level of proficiency in one world language in addition to English. This proficiency must be demonstrated by either examination or course work. See the Placement Policy for Penn State World Language Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/advising-planning-degree-program/course-placements/placement-policy-world-language-courses/>).

**B.A. Fields** (9 credits): Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Arts, World Languages, Natural Sciences, Quantification (may not be taken in the area of the student's primary major; world language credits in this category must be in a second world language in addition to English or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the first language). Credits must be selected from the list of approved courses.

**World Cultures** (0-3 credits): Select 3 credits from approved list. Students may count courses in this category in order to meet other major, minor, elective, or General Education requirements, except for the University Cultural Diversity (US/IL) requirement.

## Integrated B.A. in Japanese and M.I.A. in International Affairs

*Undergraduate degree available at the following campuses: University Park*

*Graduate degree available at the following campuses: University Park*

Requirements for the Integrated B.A. in Japanese and M.I.A. in International Affairs can be found in the Graduate Bulletin (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/graduate/programs/majors/international-affairs/#integratedundergradgradprogramtext>).

## Program Learning Objectives

- **Familiarity with language style:** Students will be able to choose and maintain the appropriate speech and writing styles of Japanese language based on purpose, formality of setting, and interlocutor/audience.
- **Knowledge of major cultural and historical events:** Students will be able to analyze and discuss the influence of historical events on current Japanese culture.
- **Listening comprehension:** Students will be able to listen to and watch, without aid, a variety of everyday Japanese audio-visual materials and comprehend them. They demonstrate, in either a written or oral format, their comprehension by identifying and interpreting the main points and some details contained in the materials.
- **Proficiency in speech:** Students will be able to describe and explain their personal interests and familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, and leisure in connected sentences in speech in Japanese.
- **Reading comprehension:** Students will be able to read, without aid, a variety of everyday Japanese texts and comprehend them. They demonstrate, in either a written or oral format, their comprehension by identifying and interpreting the main points and some details contained in the texts.
- **Writing proficiency:** Students will be able to describe and explain their personal interests and familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, and leisure in connected sentences using Japanese characters appropriately.

## Academic Advising

The objectives of the university's academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and-out-of class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee's unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/>)

### University Park

#### Liberal Arts Academic Advising

814-865-2545

Use the Liberal Arts Meet the Academic Advisers web page (<https://la.psu.edu/student-services/academic-advising/meet-the-academic-advisers/>) to see the contact information for the specific adviser(s) of this program

## Suggested Academic Plan

The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2025-26 academic year. To access previous years' suggested academic plans, please visit the archive (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/>) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition.

### Japanese, B.A. at University Park Campus

The course series listed below provides **only one** of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an **Academic Requirements** or **What If** report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

#### First Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
JAPNS 1*	4 JAPNS 2*	4
ENGL 15, 30H, ESL 15, ENGL 137H, or CAS 137H <sup>‡</sup>	3 CAS 100, ENGL 138T, or CAS 138T <sup>‡</sup>	3
LA 83	1.5 Major Course from Supporting Courses and Related Areas*	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course (GQ) <sup>‡</sup>	3
<b>14.5</b>		<b>16</b>

#### Second Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
JAPNS 3*	4 JAPNS 110*	4
JAPNS 120, 121N, or 122*	3 LA 283	1.5
BA Knowledge Domains Course	3 General Education Course	3
General Education Course (GQ) <sup>‡</sup>	3 General Education Course	3
General Education Course	3 BA Knowledge Domains Course	3
	Elective*	3
<b>16</b>		<b>17.5</b>

#### Third Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
JAPNS 401*	4 JAPNS 402*	4
General Education Course	3 JAPNS 450, JAPNS 452, JAPNS 453, or JAPNS 454*	3
General Education Course	3 ENGL 202B <sup>‡</sup>	3
BA Knowledge Domains Course	3 General Education Course	3
Elective	3 Elective	3
<b>16</b>		<b>16</b>

#### Fourth Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
JAPNS 403Y*	4 JAPNS 404*	4
JAPNS 426, 430, 431, 432, 433, or JAPNS 434*	3 Major Course from Supporting Courses and Related Areas*	3
General Education Course (GHW)	1.5 General Education Course (GHW)	1.5
Elective	3 Elective	3

Elective	3 Elective	2
<b>14.5</b>		<b>13.5</b>

**Total Credits 124**

- \* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major
- ‡ Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education
- # Course is an Entrance to Major requirement
- † Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

**University Requirements and General Education Notes:**

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy Cultural Diversity Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ), Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS) and Integrative Studies (Inter-domain) requirements. N or Q (Honors) is the suffix at the end of a course number used to help identify an Inter-domain course, but the inter-domain attribute is used to fill audit requirements. Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

All incoming Schreyer Honors College first-year students at University Park will take ENGL 137H/CAS 137H in the fall semester and ENGL 138T/CAS 138T in the spring semester. These courses carry the GWS designation and satisfy a portion of that General Education requirement. If the student's program prescribes GWS these courses will replace both ENGL 15/ENGL 30H and CAS 100A/CAS 100B/CAS 100C. Each course is 3 credits.

**Bachelor of Arts Requirements:**

Bachelor of Arts students must take 9 credits in Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Fields (Humanities; Social and Behavioral Sciences; Arts; World Languages [2nd language or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the 1st]; Natural Sciences; Quantification). The B.A. Fields courses may not be taken in the area of the student's primary major. See your adviser and the Degree Requirements section (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/>) of this Bulletin.

Bachelor of Arts students must take 3 credits in World Cultures. See your adviser and the full list of courses approved as World Cultures courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/ba-world-cultures/>).

**Advising Notes:**

- 24 credits within the major must be completed at University Park (policy 83-80). Talk with your academic adviser for additional details.
- All incoming freshmen must take a First-Year Seminar (FYS) during Fall or Spring of their first year. Academic advisers can provide a list of FYS being offered and help the student enroll. Most FYS in the College of the Liberal Arts are worth 3 cr. and count as a General Humanities (GH) or General Social Sciences (GS) course. For this reason, the FYS is not listed separately on this eight-semester plan; most students will be able to fulfill the FYS requirement while also fulfilling a GH or GS requirement.

- Students pursuing this major at a campus might require summer attendance, study abroad, or additional semesters to complete the major coursework. In their second semester, students should contact the University Park adviser to discuss options and plan their major courses accordingly.

## Japanese, B.A. at Commonwealth Campuses

The course series listed below provides **only one** of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an **Academic Requirements** or **What If** report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

### First Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
JAPNS 1*	4 JAPNS 2*	4
ENGL 15, 30H, ESL 15, ENGL 137H, or CAS 137H <sup>†</sup>	3 CAS 100, ENGL 138T, or CAS 138T <sup>‡</sup>	3
General Education Course	3 Major Course from Supporting Courses and Related Areas*	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
First-Year Seminar	3 General Education Course (GQ) <sup>‡</sup>	3
	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>

### Second Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
JAPNS 3*	4 JAPNS 110*	4
JAPNS 120, 121N, or 122*	3 General Education Course	3
BA Knowledge Domains Course	3 General Education Course	3
General Education Course (GQ) <sup>‡</sup>	3 BA Knowledge Domains Course	3
General Education Course	3 Elective	3
	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>

### Third Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
JAPNS 401*	4 JAPNS 402*	4
LA 283	1.5 JAPNS 450, JAPNS 452, JAPNS 453, or JAPNS 454*	3
General Education Course	3 ENGL 202B <sup>‡</sup>	3
General Education Course	3 General Education Course	3
BA Knowledge Domains Course	3 Elective	3
Elective	3	
	<b>17.5</b>	<b>16</b>

### Fourth Year

Fall	Credits Spring	Credits
JAPNS 403Y*	4 JAPNS 404*	4
JAPNS 426, 430, 431, 432, 433, or JAPNS 434*	3 Major Course from Supporting Courses and Related Areas*	3
General Education Course (GHW)	1.5 General Education Course (GHW)	1.5
Elective	3 Elective	3
Elective	3 Elective	2
	<b>14.5</b>	<b>13.5</b>

**Total Credits 125.5**

\* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major

‡ Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education

# Course is an Entrance to Major requirement

† Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

### University Requirements and General Education Notes:

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy Cultural Diversity Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ), Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS) and Integrative Studies (Inter-domain) requirements. N or Q (Honors) is the suffix at the end of a course number used to help identify an Inter-domain course, but the inter-domain attribute is used to fill audit requirements. Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of 'C' or better.

### Bachelor of Arts Requirements:

Bachelor of Arts students must take 9 credits in Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Fields (Humanities; Social and Behavioral Sciences; Arts; World Languages [2nd language or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the 1st]; Natural Sciences; Quantification). The B.A. Fields courses may not be taken in the area of the student's primary major. See your adviser and the Degree Requirements section (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/>) of this Bulletin.

Bachelor of Arts students must take 3 credits in World Cultures. See your adviser and the full list of courses approved as World Cultures courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/ba-world-cultures/>).

### Advising Notes:

- 24 credits within the major must be completed at University Park (policy 83-80). Talk with your academic adviser for additional details.
- All incoming freshmen must take a First-Year Seminar (FYS) during Fall or Spring of their first year. Academic advisers can provide a list of FYS being offered and help the student enroll. Most FYS in the College of the Liberal Arts are worth 3 cr. and count as a General Humanities (GH) or General Social Sciences (GS) course. For this reason, the FYS is not listed separately on this eight-semester plan; most students will be able to fulfill the FYS requirement while also fulfilling a GH or GS requirement.
- Students pursuing this major at a campus might require summer attendance, study abroad, or additional semesters to complete the major coursework. In their second semester, students should contact the University Park adviser to discuss options and plan their major courses accordingly.

## Career Paths

A B.A. in Japanese can be the basis for careers in the public sector (diplomatic corps, armed forces, intelligence, etc.), international law, business, public relations, journalism, travel and hospitality, careers

requiring foreign travel or living abroad in Japan language specialist (translating, interpreting, teaching).

## **Careers**

With a Japanese degree, you'll be prepared for a career in a wide range of industries and professions, including the public sector (diplomatic corps, armed forces, intelligence, etc.), international law, business, public relations, journalism, travel and hospitality, careers requiring foreign travel or living abroad in Asia, language specialist (translating, interpreting, teaching).

## **Opportunities for Graduate Studies**

International Affairs programs, law, or the study of Asia in various disciplines, such as art history, literature, history, religion, philosophy, political science, and sociology.

## **Professional Resources**

- Association of Asian Studies (<https://www.asianstudies.org>)

## **Contact**

### **University Park**

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University Park, PA 16802  
814-867-3260  
[asianstudies@psu.edu](mailto:asianstudies@psu.edu)

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