

# **Community Engagement: Guided Integration into Japanese Society**

C.V. Starr-Middlebury School in Japan

## **Course Objectives:**

To become someone who moves easily and effectively in the culture and society you're studying, by means of the language and cultural awareness. This will evolve as you use the language in developing friendships and lasting associations with people who live in that culture. For this to happen, you will need to develop a capacity to express yourself in a culturally coherent manner, and to understand the intentions of people who live there, as they express them.

Each of you will identify a group that consists of people who meet regularly for a specific purpose and become a member of that group by spending at least a total of 24 hours with them (6 hr/week, 4 weeks in October\*). You may choose to join a sport club or a student organization on campus. Some of you may choose to volunteer at a local elementary school or a nursing home. Some of you may choose to participate in a mini-internship. Whatever you choose, please spend at least a total of 24 hours at their office (common meeting space) so that you go through the process of becoming an in-group member, hopefully a member that contributes to the purpose and goal of that group in a meaningful way.

\*If you are joining a student organization at ICU, we strongly encourage you to join the group as soon as you can and stay with the group till the end of the term.

If you pursue a connection within the local community, School in Japan staff can help you identify potential organizations. When you meet with a community organization, please be sure to explain the context for and duration of your participation. Strive to find a mutually beneficial arrangement—one where you can accomplish your goals while also identifying opportunities to contribute positively to the organization. Please be mindful of showing respect and appreciation in these interactions as you not only represent yourself, but also the school, as we strive to expand opportunities for these off-campus connections.

Whatever you choose, please spend at least 24 hours on-site (e.g., at their office, in common meeting space, etc.) so that you go through the process of becoming an in-group member, hopefully a member that contributes to the purpose and goal of that group in a meaningful way.

Participants in this course meet once a week as a group to reflect on the development of cultural proficiency in a contextualized and structured way to help you develop and integrate skills and knowledge of the Japanese language and culture.

As a result of participating in this course, you will:

- Gain hands-on experiences of adapting to a new and different social environment that may be greatly different from yours.
- Develop a deeper understanding of some of the communication strategies that are linguistically inherent in the Japanese language, such as in/out group, distal/casual speech styles, and choice of honorific expressions.
- Improve your ability to communicate effectively with people who are unfamiliar with your linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

**Grading:**

Successful completion of Practicum	40%
Research Paper	30%
Participation/Attendance	15 %
Presentation x3	15%
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Total	100%

A (93-100)   A-(90-92.9)   B+(87-89.9)   B (83-86.9)   B- (80-82.9)  
 C+(77-79.9)   C (73-76.9)   C- (70-72.9)   D+(67-69.9)   D (60-66.9)   F(0-59.9)

**Research Paper**

Should be five typed pages 1.5 spaced, use times/Mincho, 12 pts.

- \* Find at least seven references on the topic.
- \* Include a 100 word description (in English) of your practicum.
- \* The paper is due on Monday, November 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Syllabus:**

ILC Rm. 131, 10:00-11:00

	Topic		
9/10	Cultural Competence		
17	Work Ethics in Japan		
24	Preparation for Interview		
10/1	Practicum		
8			
15			
22			
29			
11/5	Reflections		