

Japanese

Learning Goals

1. The major requires students to achieve proficiency in Japanese language (four years or equivalent) and culture (four courses), to study abroad for at least one semester, and to complete a O400-level seminar in the Japanese Studies department.
2. To meet the language proficiency requirement of four years of study (or equivalent), students are strongly encouraged to begin the study of Japanese in their first academic year. Students who begin study of Japanese in the sophomore year must attend the summer Japanese School before study abroad in Japan.
3. Studying in Japan for one semester (Fall or Spring) is required, but studying in Japan for the full junior year is strongly encouraged. Elective courses taken in Japan, in addition to language courses, are strongly encouraged but will not substitute for the four required culture courses to be taken at Middlebury.

About the major

The Japanese language program emphasizes all four skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Students learn to use Japanese in a variety of environments and become confident speakers, readers, and writers. Most students begin Japanese in their first year at Middlebury and progress through four levels in the modern language (Tokyo common/standard speech). Advanced courses are available for students who enter with prior training in the language or for those who accelerate their study by attending the summer Japanese School and studying abroad in the C.V. Starr-Middlebury School in Tokyo. Middlebury is one of the few colleges to offer an advanced seminar in Japanese language. Cultural fluency is an essential part of our program. Courses taught in English on modern and classical Japanese literature, film, anime, gender, and society provide cultural breadth and disciplinary depth. Seniors have the opportunity to work closely with faculty advisors on an independent project, translation, or honors thesis.

“The Japanese Department was my home away from home and the best part of my academic experience during college. In my Japanese courses I felt deeply immersed in a culture different than my own and was challenged each day to tackle difficult course work. Takahashi Sensei and other mentors in the Japanese Department serve as my role models for the relationships I foster with colleagues and students.”

—Ashley Laux '06
Program Director, Center for Community Engagement, Middlebury College

Reasons you might choose this major

- You are curious about a culture that combines tradition with high-tech advancement.
- You are eager to understand values and ideas that have shaped modern Japan and brought it to prominence in international industry, arts, and popular media.
- You are passionate to learn about the many cultural innovations Japan has brought to the world.
- You want to learn a language so radically different from English and other Indo-European languages that it will challenge you to rethink how linguistic systems are structured and learned.
- You want to have a competitive edge in the global market through an immersive linguistic experience and sensitivity to cultural difference.
- You aspire to proficiency in a study that will open global doors in the arts, finance, fashion, trade, popular media, journalism, diplomacy, and nongovernmental organizations.



Translating Learning into Professional Competencies

Throughout your time at Middlebury, you will develop and enhance the following core professional competencies, skills, and dispositions highly valued by employers that will prepare you for leadership and success in any given field:

Critical Thinking: Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions, and overcome problems.

Oral/Written Communications: Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms.

Teamwork/Collaboration: Build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers from diverse backgrounds.

Leadership: Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals, and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others.

Professionalism/Work Ethic: Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits.

Global/Intercultural Fluency: Value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, and religions.

Digital Technology: Leverage existing digital technologies ethically and efficiently to solve problems, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.

Career Management: Identify and articulate one's skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to career goals, and identify areas necessary for professional development.

Where Japanese majors go

Applying your learning through internships . . .

Students pursue internships and research in a variety of fields, enabling them to apply their liberal arts learning in real-world settings. Internships, research, and self-directed projects enrich your academic experience and help prepare you for life after Middlebury. Students have interned or done research at the following:

Ashoka Japan

NBC Universal

The China Institute

J.P. Morgan Chase

The Foundation Center

Mallet Japan

U.S. Department of Education

International Secondary School in Tokyo

Inter-American Development Bank

Saitama NPO Center

McLean Hospital

Minsai Center

U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom

The James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies

Friends for Asia

Emerging Asia Group

Focus Advisory Services LLC

Pacific Investment Management Co.

Cork Inc.

U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs

. . . leading to meaningful, dynamic, and engaging career paths.

See just some of the many interesting ways our graduates have applied their liberal arts learning to engage the world. If you want to see what other Middlebury alumni are doing now, log into Midd2Midd and search by major. [go/midd2midd](#)

Sports Illustrated, *Senior Editor*

MKE Consulting LLC, *President*

Char Sakamoto Ishii Lum & Ching, *Attorney*

Mongolia International Capital Corporation, *President, CEO, and Founder*

Seattle Foundation, *Operations Manager, Philanthropic Services*

U.S. Engineering Co., *Chairman and CEO*

FactSet Research Systems, *Vice President, Strategic Partnerships and Alliances-Japan*

The Boston Consulting Group/London, *Principal*

GameChanger Media, Inc., *Founder, Chief Product and Technology Officer*

ION Translations LLC, *Principal-Owner*

U.S. Customs and Border Protection, *Attorney, Office of Chief Counsel*

Center for American Progress, *Director for East and Southeast Asia*

Central Tanshi Securities, *Equity Derivatives Broker*

Academic Experiences Abroad/Kama'aina Magazine, *Head of Partnerships and Development, Writer*

Seattle Children's Hospital, *ER Pediatrician*

Ogilvy CommonHealth Worldwide, *Public Health Specialist, Specialty Marketing*

KDDI Global/Total Call, *Corporate Planning Expert*

Clarion Healthcare, *Senior Associate*

Liberty Global, *Manager, Executive Compensation*

Mitsubishi Research Institute, *Researcher*

Nikkei America, Inc., *News Translator*