

JAPANESE STUDIES

Faculty: MacLauchlan, Munson, and Paris.
(Department of Asian Studies)

The minor in Japanese Studies presents students with a comprehensive approach to the study of Japan and the Japanese language. It prepares students to live, study, and pursue employment in Japan, by providing them with advanced opportunities to speak, read, and write the language in professional and daily settings; by requiring them to engage with a variety of topics in Japanese Studies, including society, history, culture, cinema, and literature; and by providing opportunities for a study abroad experience through January travel courses, or at one of the college's approved partners, such as Kansai Gaidai University.

- Japanese Studies Minor (<https://catalog.rmc.edu/programs/japanese-studies/japanese-studies-minor/>)

JAPN 111 - Elementary Japanese I (3 Hours)

Introduction to modern spoken Japanese with an emphasis on speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Upon successful completion of JAPN 111, students should be able to comprehend and produce Japanese in a range of real-world activities, and to write and recognize both the hiragana and katakana syllabaries. C21:FL.

Curriculum: FL

JAPN 112 - Elementary Japanese II (3 Hours)

A continuation of JAPN 111, with an increased focus on kanji characters. C21:FL.

Prerequisite(s): JAPN 111 or permission of instructor

Curriculum: FL

JAPN 181 - T:Special Topics (3 Hours)

These courses focus on areas of Japanese studies not specifically covered in the general curriculum and are designed to meet the needs of students.

JAPN 220 - Culture of Japan (3 Hours)

This course is a broad survey introduction to the popular and mass culture of modern Japan through works of literature, film, animation, art, and media. Students will consider questions of what makes something part of popular or mass culture; how historical, economic, political, and/or societal concerns shape popular tastes, what is represented, and what is considered permissible to represent; and how Japanese culture circulates beyond Japan and East Asia, and how this relates to questions of political power and influence. No Japanese language skills required. C21:NW.

JAPN 221 - Japan Past and Present (3 Hours)

A January travel course designed to explore the history and culture of Japan. Destinations in Japan may vary but will include Tokyo and/or Kyoto. Two weeks of instruction in Ashland and two weeks in Japan. No Japanese language skills are required. C21:EL.

Prerequisite(s): permission of instructor

Curriculum: EL

JAPN 232 - Japanese Literature in Translation (3 Hours)

This course will explore the literature of modern Japan in English translation. Topics to be discussed include the relationship between the individual and society; Japan's international relations; WWII and the occupation of postwar Japan; and the modern Japanese family, among others. No Japanese language skills are required. C21:AE,HU,NW.

Cross-list: FLET 232

Curriculum: AE,HU,NW

JAPN 239 - Traditional Japanese Literature (3 Hours)

This course explores the literature and cultural production of premodern Japan, covering from approximately the 8th century to mid-19th century. In particular, this course will examine the relationship between literary writings and the religious, spiritual, and political life of premodern Japan. C21:AE,NW.

Cross-list: FLET 239

Curriculum: AE,NW

JAPN 251 - Advanced Intermediate Japanese I (4 Hours)

JAPN 251 is an accelerated intermediate course in the Japanese language, with increased emphasis on speaking, listening, reading, and writing in Japanese, and a continued focus on kanji characters (125 total).

Prerequisite(s): JAPN 112

JAPN 252 - Advanced Intermediate Japanese II (4 Hours)

JAPN 252 is an accelerated intermediate course in the Japanese language, with increased emphasis on speaking, listening, reading, and writing in Japanese, and a continued focus on kanji characters (300 total).

Prerequisite(s): JAPN 251

JAPN 260 - Contemporary Japan (3 Hours)

This course is an in-depth exploration of modern Japanese culture and society; no previous knowledge of Japan or Japanese is necessary. Topics covered include education, crime, sexuality, international relations, popular culture, the environment, the 2020 Olympics, and Japan's imperial family, among others. By the conclusion of the course, students should have a comprehensive understanding of contemporary Japanese society. Evaluation will be determined on the basis of discussion, in-class writing assignments, and a final project. C21:CL,HU,NW.

Curriculum: CL,HU,NW

JAPN 270 - Weird Japan (3 Hours)

Monsters, magic, and horror have long haunted Japanese popular culture and can tell us much about Japanese society. Starting with Shinto creation myths and traditional ghost tales, this course is an overview of Japanese conceptions of the strange and supernatural, particularly with reference to key points in Japan's history. Through fiction, film, and art, this class will explore the 'weird side' of the Japanese experience. No Japanese language skills required. C21:HC,HU,NW.

Curriculum: HC,HU,NW

JAPN 281 - T:Special Topics (3 Hours)

These courses focus on areas of Japanese studies not specifically covered in the general curriculum and are designed to meet the needs of advanced students.

JAPN 292 - Japanese Film as History: The Works of Kurosawa Akira (3 Hours)

This course serves as a general introduction to postwar Japanese film through close examination of several films of Kurosawa Akira, one of the most celebrated directors in the history of the medium. Classic samurai drama such as "Rashomon," "The Seven Samurai," and other period films will be the focus of the course. Students will be introduced to basic theories and concepts in film studies, as well as topics in Japanese history relevant to both the settings and production of the films. Close attention will also be paid to issues of nationalism, gender, war, and cross-cultural adaptation. Japanese language skills are not required. Offered infrequently. C21:GE,HU,NW.

Cross-list: FILM 292

JAPN 294 - Early to Premodern Japan (3 Hours)

This course is a survey of Japanese culture and society, from the earliest beginnings to the 19th century. We will focus on topics such as the influence of Chinese civilization, the origins of Shinto and Japanese Buddhism, the development of art and literature, and the rise of the samurai class. No Japanese language skills required. Offered alternate years. C21:GE,HU,NW.

Curriculum: GE,HU,NW

JAPN 295 - Modern Japan (3 Hours)

This course is a survey of Japanese culture and society from the 19th century to the present. At the completion of the course, students should be versant in the basic themes of modern Japan, including international relations, societal trends, arts and literature, and the globalization of Japanese popular culture. No Japanese language skills are required. Offered alternate years. C21:GE,HU,NW.

Curriculum: GE,HU,NW

JAPN 381 - Special Topics in Japanese (3 Hours)

These courses focus on topics in Japanese not specifically covered in the general curriculum and are designed to meet the needs of advanced students.

Prerequisite(s): permission of instructor

JAPN 382 - Special Topics in Japanese (3 Hours)

These courses focus on topics in Japanese not specifically covered in the general curriculum and are designed to meet the needs of advanced students.

Prerequisite(s): permission of instructor

JAPN 491 - Independent Study (3 Hours)

An independent study under the guidance of a member of the department. At least a 3.25 cumulative GPA and approval by the curriculum committee are required.