

The Center for Japanese Studies

Over thirty years of experience in educating international leaders

Since its founding in 1974, the Center has been a leader in Japanese language studies, with the goal of helping each student develop a better understanding of the Japanese people and language. By living and learning in Japan, students at the Center experience the “real Japan” together with a wide cross-section of people from other countries and cultures. The result is a dynamic group of students from many different backgrounds united in their goal to discover Japan.

Intensive language instruction

Communication is the key to understanding culture. Japanese courses at Nanzan therefore stress all four language skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Intensive courses from elementary to advanced Japanese are offered by outstanding and experienced Japanese teaching professionals. Rapid progress in the language soon allows students to make the most of their new fluency by taking advantage of the many unique extra-curricular learning opportunities that are available. Foreign students joining any of the student clubs and circles find themselves improving their language skills as well as understanding the Japanese culture more deeply.

Courses in Japanese Studies

Students with advanced Japanese language proficiency can take a range of seminars conducted in Japanese. Registration on the regular Nanzan undergraduate curriculum is also possible. Courses in translation at elementary and intermediate levels and classical Japanese for advanced students are also provided. For those whose Japanese ability does not allow them to handle courses taught in Japanese, there is a wide selection of lecture courses taught in English. These cover the politics, economy, society, religions, literature, and history of Japan, while the material is often placed within a wider Asian context. Courses in management, intercultural communication, linguistics, and language acquisition are also on offer.

Understanding through creativity

To help students develop a deeper appreciation of Japanese culture, courses in traditional Japanese arts are offered. At Nanzan the emphasis is on learning through practice rather than on an abstract, theoretical approach. Flower arrangement (*ikebana*) classes quickly move from the basics to original flower arrangement, while calligraphy (*shodō*) courses call for a brush in the student’s hand from the start. And Chinese black ink painting (*sumie*) lessons and woodblock print (*hanga*) sessions by master printmakers have the student learning practical techniques right away.



The whole of Japan is your classroom

To complement the academic program, the Center for Japanese Studies offers several trips and study tours to places of special interest in the area. In recent years, these trips have included visits to historic Kyoto and Nara, a stay at a Zen Buddhist monastery where students can experience the simplicity, austerity, and discipline of the peaceful Way of Zen, and a tour of a Toyota Motors assembly plant. Nanzan students welcome Center students to their clubs, sports activities, and social activities. Local groups often extend invitations to Center students to attend festivals, performances, and community events. All of these experiences provide a welcome, unique exposure to another way of life with people from around the world.

Immersing yourself in the culture

What could be a better way of immersing oneself in a culture than living with a Japanese family? The Center’s home-stay program has been extremely well received and appreciated by numerous students at the Center. These live-in situations give everyone a precious opportunity to communicate across cultures and to make life-long friendships. Suddenly, students realize that distance between faraway countries is no greater than the distance between people—between “you and me”. Students may also be accommodated in one of the privately managed dormitories available to Center students and can experience living together with Japanese students, or even company workers. Meanwhile, the University’s off-campus international dormitories give students the opportunity to live with a Japanese roommate in an international, intercultural setting.



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Making the Most of Your Stay

Here is a glimpse of some of the culturally rich activities that students at the Center for Japanese Studies can enjoy.

Tour of the Toyota Motors Assembly Plant

Center students have the opportunity to tour the assembly plant of the world-famous Toyota Motors, where they can learn about the automotive industry as well as Toyota's vehicle production and corporate management systems. With plenty of opportunity to ask questions, students enjoy this popular field trip whether they are interested in business or the automotive industry or not.



An Evening of Kabuki

Students may choose to spend an evening enjoying the classical Japanese art of Kabuki. In order to gain a better appreciation for the art, there is a brief introduction to Kabuki prior to the performance, and they also have the rare opportunity to go on a backstage tour.



past have been to such historically rich and beautiful places as the ancient capital city of Kyoto and the Shinto shrines at Ise.

The Zen Experience

The visit to a Zen Buddhist monastery is unforgettable. Students experience the peacefulness of sitting in meditation, or *zazen*, as well as the austerity of the Buddhist diet.

Tour of Noritake and the Toyota Commemorative Museum of Industry and Technology

This afternoon tour starts at Nagoya's famous Noritake china craft center and museum, before moving on to the Toyota Commemorative Museum of Industry and Technology. At the museum, students learn about Toyota's role in the development of both the weaving and automotive industries.

The Center's Special Excursion

Nagoya's central location makes day-trips convenient and economical. Students have the chance to participate in a Center-arranged one-day bus tour. Trips in the

Here is what some of our recent graduates had to say about the CJS program

NGUYEN, Thao Phuong (Vietnam)

CJS Class of 2008-2009
Hanoi University of Business and Technology



I could not believe that my dream had come true. I was so surprised and happy when I received the scholarship from Mitsubishi

UFJ Foundation to study Japanese in Nanzan University. It is a fantastic opportunity for me to study the language of Japan, and to learn about its culture and people.

I wish I had learned Japanese before I arrived here. When I first came to Japan, I only knew hiragana and katakana, so it took me a long time to become able to understand Japanese. I could not express what I wanted to say to my teachers or my host mother, so initially I only spoke in English. It was a hard for me, but my teachers, who are really kind and interesting people, tried hard to help me and the other students learn and become interested in Japanese. At Nanzan we can make friends with many nice students, and get to know about the different cultures of the world.

Every day, we have to memorize vocabulary and then have vocabulary quizzes, kanji tests, dialogue checks, and audio drills. Sometimes we have a chance to meet and talk with Japanese students. It is a very good way to practice the Japanese language. We have a lot of homework, as well as essays, which we must hand in on time. The teachers put pressure on us, so that we do our best. We are gradually becoming better at Japanese thanks to our teachers' guidance. We also learn about Japanese culture through classes such as Shodo (書道) – Calligraphy, Sado (茶道) – Japanese Culture and Tea Ceremony, Ikebana (活け花) – Flower Arrangement, Hanga (版画) – Woodblock Printing, and Sumie (墨絵) – Ink Painting.

Besides studying language, we can enjoy the many nice trips organized by the CJS. We are given lots of opportunities to make friends with local Japanese and other foreign students, and to find out about the culture and people of Japan. I would like to thank the staff of the CJS, who were always willing to help us to deal with our difficulties.

My nine months at Nanzan is an unforgettable part of my life. I am very grateful to all of the people who made my dream possible.

SMIT, Julia Maria Antonia (Germany)

CJS Class of 2008-2009
Free University of Berlin



During the exchange program with Nanzan University I was given the opportunity to improve my spoken and written Japanese as

much as to get a solid education in the grammar and general linguistic aspects of the language. I was also able to take part in different art classes, which was a very good chance to learn more about Japanese art and culture. These classes offer a very good general, but also specific, overview of the historical and contemporary techniques, as well as traditions, of the practical arts. Apart from this, it provides students with a solid foundation or platform for considering these arts from the point of view of an art historian. I attended the Hanga and Shodo classes and had a lot of interesting experiences. Thanks to their good structure, these courses are especially good for beginners. The teachers are very sympathetic and extremely capable.

I recommend the Hanga course to those who are not very familiar with ukiyo-e and because it has scope for personal creativity. The same goes for the Shodo course, by the end of which the students

are able to create their own stamp and practice the art of calligraphy, thereby practicing kanji and writing as well as displaying their own creativity.

BELLAMY, Serina Kinyear (United States)

CJS Class of 2008-2009
University of Notre Dame



The time that I have spent in the CJS program has helped me to improve my Japanese skills and has taught me a lot about Japanese

culture and society. Before I came to Japan, I did not know much about Japanese life and customs, but after spending nine months here, I have definitely gained a better understanding of Japanese traditions, politics, and people. As a result, I have come to view Japan not as a foreign country, but as a second home where I can visit the friends I have made here and my host family. However, most importantly, my Japanese proficiency had also improved during my stay here. I can now read, write, and speak Japanese at a level that would have taken me years to accomplish at my home university. I was able to work through two textbooks in two semesters because of the rigorous Japanese language classes at Nanzan. Classes are held every day and the pace can be a bit overwhelming, but because classes are so intensive, students are able to learn Japanese vocabulary and grammar at an accelerated pace in small classes with attentive teachers. The teachers are so dedicated and the classes are so well organized that your Japanese cannot help but to improve. Lastly, my experience at Nanzan has been a rewarding and unpredictable one. I will never forget the people I have met, the things that I have seen and learned during my stay at Nanzan.

Interaction with Local Students

At Nanzan, we understand the importance of interaction between international and local students in helping our students from overseas adjust to their new surroundings. On their first day here, Center students are taken in small groups on campus tours led by local students, who help to answer questions about life at Nanzan and provide important information about living in the Nagoya area. After the tour there is a welcome party, offering another chance for local and international students to get to know one another.

Center students also have the opportunity to interact with local students at "Coffee Hours", which are organized by local students, and are held once or twice a month.

<Message from "Coffee Hour" students>

Hello! We hold "Coffee Hour" events every month as good opportunities for cultural interaction between Nanzan international and local students. You can definitely make friends here. Join us!



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BUYCO, Ryan Al (United States)

CJS Class of 2008-2009
The George Washington University



My experience at Nanzan University has been one of growth for me. The CJS program has enabled me to grow linguistically and personally. With three

hours of Japanese class a day, I feel that every aspect of my Japanese has significantly improved. CJS also offers several additional seminar classes, among which I took Elementary Translation. This class was by far the most interesting class I took during my studies at Nanzan and it allowed me to make practical use of the material I learned in Intensive Japanese. Without a doubt, the best part of Elementary Translation was being able to translate portions of Harry Potter.

Also, I was a dorm student, so for me, living in Yamazato Koryu Kaikan was the best possible way to study abroad in Japan. Since CJS's schedule is completely different than the rest of the university, interacting with Japanese students can be difficult. However, living in Yamazato has allowed me to make life-long friendships with Japanese students my own age.

WOOLRIDGE, Daniel Bradford Cary (United States)

CJS Class of 2008-2009
Brown University



Being a part of the CJS program for a semester left me with an experience I will carry with me for the rest of my life. Before coming to Japan, my goals were

to become comfortable with speaking Japanese with native speakers, and then to become as close as possible to fluency. While the experience I have had for the past five months with the CJS at Nanzan, has been challenging at times, I feel that it has brought me far in terms of reaching these goals. I now feel a lot more comfortable when I speak Japanese around anyone, and while I feel that I have not

yet reached fluency, that goal is now much more within reach. I will always be grateful to the teachers and the students of Nanzan University for helping me reach this point in my life.

LESTER, Kendahl Marie (United States)

CJS Class of 2008-2009
Dickinson College



Before coming to Nanzan, I studied Japanese at my home university for two years, but I was never able to devote as much time to learning the language

because passing my major courses was a higher priority for me. At the Center for Japanese Studies, however, Japanese classes are more challenging, requiring me to devote my time to mastering the language in a rigorous environment. Suffice it to say, it was daunting having Japanese classes everyday, as well as a large amount of homework and quizzes. In the end, however, I was rewarded by learning and accomplishing much. When I first came to Japan, I was easily embarrassed by my Japanese skills, and would often refuse to explain my thoughts or feelings when talking with my host family. In the IJ500 classes, the teachers always encouraged me to speak Japanese, not only when practicing grammar or vocabulary, but in expressing myself. One teacher in particular always encouraged me to define words and ideas in Japanese, rather than simply restating the English translation given in the textbook. Although this led to many mistakes and frustrations, it encouraged me to think and speak in Japanese instead of merely memorizing the sentences in the text. In addition, IJ 500 provided many opportunities to express myself in the language, whether through an email exchange with Nanzan students, discussions about Japanese culture or customs, or debates. Though I have not reached fluency, I am satisfied with how much my Japanese has improved and am happy that I had the opportunity to come to Japan and study at CJS.

KRAFT, Jeffrey Michael (United States)

CJS Class of 2008-2009
University of Notre Dame



Japanese Foreign Policy was one of the best lecture courses I have ever taken, not just at CJS, but anywhere. Much of the course's strength comes from its balance.

It deals with the foreign policy making process in Japan in the first half, before moving on to Japan's major foreign policy relationships in the second, thereby offering an excellent mix of historical background coupled with current events. Furthermore, this course has something to offer students of all levels of expertise, providing plenty of interesting material for those knowledgeable in foreign policy while still remaining accessible to beginners (though at least a basic understanding of twentieth century history will help). Lastly, the course balances the workload well. The reading proved interesting and never unreasonable in length, and the mid-term and final papers provided an interesting twist on the standard term paper, with the first written as an academic book review and the second as a brief to a fictional prime minister's special advisory committee on foreign policy. The professor provides another good reason to take the course. David Potter's vast knowledge of the subject, his approachable nature, interactive teaching style, and dry sense of humor make every lecture interesting (and rarely laugh-free). In all, Japanese foreign policy is an engaging lecture course with broad appeal that will hold your attention and has real world application.

BEKKER, Jonathon Edward (United States)

CJS Class of 2008-2009
Grinnell College



Before coming to Nanzan, I heard nothing but amazing things about their program. A teacher of mine who was an alum of the program gave it an especially glowing recommendation. To say the least, my expectations were very high. I am happy to say that Nanzan was more than what I had expected.

These past nine months at Nanzan have been possibly the best nine months of my life. Attending Japanese classes for three hours every day, five days a week, was at times challenging to my attention span, but the hard work paid off in the end. All of my sensei made an effort to spice up class by bringing in Japanese students to discuss and debate with us, or

Yes, the Japanese program was excellent. It was not without its issues, but what is school if there is nothing to complain about? Not all of my Japanese teachers were the best I have ever had, but at least one was. Not every assignment was engaging and rewarding, but enough were. Not everything was done in a way I was accustomed to, but that was all the better. I grew a lot not just in terms of Japanese ability but also as a student, in large part because of the need to adapt to a different approach to education.

While the Japanese language class is half of the academic experience at Nanzan, I think it is important to point out how good the other half can be. Not all the classes are created equal, but they all have contributed to my understanding of Japan or Japanese in some way. In particular, Japanese in Tourism: Hotel Japanese provided a wealth of opportunities.

Using polite language in Japanese involves a terrifying linguistic labyrinth of special words and inscrutable social considerations. Hotel Japanese helps make that labyrinth much less terrifying. I think that this course is essential for anyone who wants to work in Japan at some point. Those taking the class even have a chance to get an internship at a Japanese hotel, and if nothing else, you will finally be able to understand what the people in the service industry are saying when they ring up your purchases.

This is not even to mention the abundance of amazing non-academic opportunities Nanzan provides. My time at Nanzan has been a fun, stressful year in which I have learned a great deal. So coming full circle, I offer the same kind of glowing recommendation my Japanese teacher gave me two years ago.

SHEN, Diana (United States)

CJS Class of 2008-2009
Yale University



These past nine months at Nanzan have been possibly the best nine months of my life. Attending Japanese classes for three hours every day, five days a

week, was at times challenging to my attention span, but the hard work paid off in the end. All of my sensei made an effort to spice up class by bringing in Japanese students to discuss and debate with us, or

by starting a "journal exchange" through which we were able to make friends with Japanese penpals. The idea of talking to Japanese people for the first time no longer intimidates me as it did back in September. While I am far from fluent, I have grown accustomed to the flow of the language and daily conversation. Much of this is thanks to the listening and speaking practice I got from the morning Japanese classes, but also not to be forgotten is the simple fact that this is all happening in Japan. Every day you will encounter tens of dozens of Japanese people, whether it's simply walking by them on campus and overhearing snippets of Japanese conversation or chatting with a native speaker in the dorm. Every moment I spent here helped me improve my Japanese.

In addition to language study, there's also "people study." Personally, culture shock occurred on several different levels and continued throughout the year. Living in one of the dorms provided by CJS, I've had countless late-night conversations with Japanese people, during which I intensely felt the gap between American and Japanese ways of thinking. The cultural exchange is invaluable.

FORTE, Sean (United States)

CJS Class of 2008-2009
The University of Hawaii



I came to Japan with a lot of Japanese merely floating around in my head. After only a short while, however, that knowledge soon found structure and depth.

Through my experience in Japan, and within Nanzan's CJS, I have been able to immerse myself in a real environment, one which I think is essential to anyone's Japanese acquisition.

Linguistically, while classes were intensive, they and the professors provided all the materials and methodology to excel; not simply emphasizing grammar and vocabulary, but also insight into the world's current issues: global population, environmental protection, natural resources, unemployment, education, and more.

Culturally, interacting with Japanese and international students was by far the most enjoyable. I became great friends with one of my Japanese dorm-mates and

enjoyed traveling, conversing, and carrying out daily activities all in Japanese. As Japanese is everyone's shared language, such interactions allowed me to accept the practicality of the Japanese language as a means of communication.

In these nine months I have had so many unforgettable experiences and come to understand myself as a person as well. I recommend CJS, and Japan in general, to anyone wanting to experience Japanese culture and language.

RONKONHARJU, Sami Alekski (Finland)

CJS Class of 2008-2009
University of Leeds



In the spring semester of 2009, I took Japanese Religions II and Japanese Foreign Policy.

Not being a politics student myself, I was surprised how easy the

lectures were to follow, while still maintaining the interest of those dedicated to the study of politics. The atmosphere of the classes was relaxed, encouraging many interesting conversations. Many of the major themes of Japanese foreign policy were explored in detail: Article 9, the Security Treaty with the United States as well as relations with other Asian countries. The evaluation of the course was mostly based on two essays, the first being a book review of Koizumi Diplomacy. After taking the course, I feel that my understanding has deepened considerably not only Japanese foreign policy, but also of the workings of politics in Japan at large.

In Japanese Religions II the modern field of Japanese religions is explored in detail. As well as exploring modern Shinto and Buddhism, many of the new religions that have sprung up since the Meiji period are studied, from Aum Shinrikyo to Soka Gakkai. I was impressed by the perspective the lecturer brought to the subject and how comparisons were drawn with religious traditions in the west. The course was graded mostly on two free-form essays. Having taken the course, my understanding of not just the religious aspects of the Japanese life, but through it, also the understanding of their very view of life has developed a lot.