

# A Decade of Japanese Language Courses for English Medium Majors<sup>1</sup>

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**【Abstract】** From fall 2010, the University of Tsukuba has been offering Japanese Language and Japanese Issues Courses targeting international students enrolled in English medium major programs to enable them to communicate with Japanese peers on campus, and participate in Japanese society in a variety of daily situations. This report focuses on the Japanese Language Course. We give an overview of the course creation background, information about the increasing number of participating schools and course participants, with a discussion concerning class structure, such as levels, credits and periods, in order to provide an overview of changes the course has undergone in the ten years of its existence. This report will also describe the challenges faced by the course coordinators in terms of providing suitable class levels to all participants. Finally, the needs of the students will be discussed by describing classes with a cultural focus and cross-cultural activities.

**【Keywords】** Japanese language course, English medium majors, coordination challenges, student needs

## 10年間の英語プログラム日本語科目

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### 【要 旨】

筑波大学では2010年度秋学期より英語を媒介語として学位を取得するプログラムに在籍する学生のために日本語・日本事情科目を提供するようになった。目的として留学生が大学内で日本人学生と交流できるようになり、日本社会においても様々な場面で参加できるようになることが挙げられる。本稿は、日本語科目に焦点を当てる。参加する学類及び受講者の増減について記述し、科目開発、及び内容や目的について説明する。開始から10年が経った現在、科目に施してきた変更点、そしてコース・コーディネーションにおける課題や受講者のニーズ、またそれぞれの課題に対して講じてきた対策にも触れる。

**【キーワード】** 日本語科目 英語を媒介語とする学類 コース・コーディネーション 受講者のニーズ

## 1. Introduction

From fall 2010, the University of Tsukuba has been offering Japanese Language and Japanese Issues Courses targeting international students enrolled in English medium major programs to enable them to communicate with Japanese peers on campus, and participate in Japanese society in a variety of daily situations (Bushnell 2012). These courses came into being as a response to the University of Tsukuba being selected in 2009 as a university participating in the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) “Global 30” project aiming to increase international students to 300,000 by the year 2020 by offering English medium majors at selected Japanese universities<sup>2</sup>.

At the outset of the program, these courses were called G30 Japanese Language and G30 Japanese Issues with “G30” being short for “Global 30”. From 2018, the name “G30 Program” was changed to “English Program”, hereafter EP. “English Program” is the literal translation of 「英語プログラム」(Eigo puruguramu)<sup>3</sup>. Because “English Program” might cause confusion among prospective students due to its possible association with English Philology or English Literature, the EP Course Registration Guidebook defines “English Program” as “an English-taught degree program such as the ones offered by the schools of Social and International Studies, Life and Environmental Sciences, and Medical Sciences, or the Bachelor’s Program in Global Issues, or Interdisciplinary Engineering” (University of Tsukuba 2019a, p.3). Despite the official name change, and probably due to the confusion explained above, instructors and participants alike continue to refer to the English-taught degree programs as G30 programs and related courses as G30 courses. From here on, however, this report will refer to the G30 Japanese Language Course as the EP Japanese Language Course, regardless of the timing within the program.

At the University of Tsukuba, initially, EP Japanese language classes were organized by the International Student Center. This Center merged with the Foreign Language Center in 2016 to become the Center for Education of Global Communication (CEGLOC). Meanwhile from the academic year 2013, the University also changed its academic calendar based on trimesters to a system based on semesters (Bushnell 2013). The changes that occurred to the EP Japanese Language Course during the above transitions will be touched upon briefly in this report<sup>4</sup>. Changes aside, the original course aim of providing the targeted international

students with basic to high-intermediate Japanese language ability through credited courses has remained a priority.

This report will give an overview of the increasing number of participating schools, and changes in participant numbers and class implementation. This will provide an account of the changes the course has gone through in the ten years of its existence. This report will also describe the challenges faced by the course coordinators, and the needs of the students.

## **2. Overview of the EP Japanese Language Course**

### **2.1 The EP Japanese Language Course in Numbers**

In this section, we describe the number of participating schools, fluctuations in student and instructor numbers, and changes in the class levels.

At the inception of the EP in fall 2010, students of three schools participated in the EP Japanese Language Course. In fall 2017, one bachelor program was added, and in fall 2019 one more program joined, for a current total of five schools (Table 1). The research fields of these programs range from social and international studies, to science and engineering, providing a wide variety of bachelor degrees. The increasing number of Schools offering English medium major programs reflects the University's international strategy of globalization (University of Tsukuba, 2019b).

Table 2 provides an overview of the EP Japanese Language Course. The number of students has fluctuated greatly over the past ten years. During Years 1 and 2 (Fall 2010-Spring 2012), about 20 students were enrolled each year. When the name value of the English medium major programs rose, student numbers gradually increased to around 60 in Years 7 (Fall 2016~) and 8 (Fall 2017~). In Year 9 (Fall 2018~), numbers declined dramatically to 25, when, upon the recommendation of MEXT, international students were counted as part of the Schools' overall quota (Council on Undergraduate Education 2017a). Prior to that, they fell outside this quota, which allowed the Schools to accept a higher number. With an additional School participating from Year 10 (Fall 2019~), the numbers are showing a slight increase again, but first-year student numbers are expected to remain around 30 for the coming years. After acquiring the required foreign language study credits through the EP Japanese Language Course, second-year through fourth-year students are entitled to enroll in the EP Japanese Language Course for additional elective credits. However, their number is limited and first-year students are given preference and

priority in decisions concerning class levels and content. The actual numbers of students attending differ slightly from those in Table 2 because the returning student numbers are not included.

**Table 1: English Medium Schools Participating in the EP Japanese Language Course**

Start of Participation	School
2010~	<b>School of Life and Environmental Science</b> Bachelor of Agricultural Science Bachelor of Bio-resource Science/ Agricultural Science Bachelor of Science in Biology Bachelor of Science in Geoscience <b>School of Medicine and Medical Sciences</b> Bachelor of International Medical Science <b>School of Social and International Studies</b> Bachelor of Arts in International Social Sciences
2017~	<b>Bachelor's Program in Global Issues</b>
2019~	<b>Bachelor's Program in Interdisciplinary Engineering</b>

In the Fall term of 2010 (Year 1), the students were divided into two levels based on the results of a paper-based placement test. From Year 2, class levels were reconsidered in order to address the wide variety in student levels, and seven levels were provided until Year 6. From the Fall term of 2016 (Year 7), the level system was revised once more. The system of seven levels provided throughout the year were streamlined into a system of four levels in the fall term leading to four slightly higher levels in the following spring, with students remaining in the same class group with the same instructor for two consecutive semesters (Table 3).

**Table 2: EP Japanese Language Course Overview**

Year	Number of first-year students	Number of levels	Number of instructors
Year 1 (Fall 2010~)	20	2	2
Year 2 (Fall 2011~)	22	7	4
Year 3 (Fall 2012~)	43	7	4
Year 4 (Fall 2013~)	56	7	4
Year 5 (Fall 2014~)	41	7	4
Year 6 (Fall 2015~)	44	7	4
Year 7 (Fall 2016~)	64	4+4	4
Year 8 (Fall 2017~)	60	4+4	5
Year 9 (Fall 2018~)	25	4+4	5
Year 10 (Fall 2019~)	30	4+4	5

**Table 3: Overview of Official Class Levels (Fall 2016~)**  
(Table adapted from Vanbaelen (2018))

Pre-Fall	Fall Term		Spring Term
Freshman Seminar	101	→	102
	201	→	202
	301	→	302
	401	→	402

Over the years, the number of instructors has also increased gradually, from two in Year 1 to four from Year 2 to Year 7. From Year 8 (Fall 2017~), the EP Japanese Language Course has been taught by the Course coordinator and four part-time instructors. The additional instructor joined the team when students enrolled in the Bachelor's Program in Global Issues started taking the EP Japanese Language Course. However, from Year 2, the number of provided levels has always exceeded the number of instructors. How four instructors were able to instruct seven levels in a fixed timetable (i.e., all levels were offered on the same days and periods) will be addressed in Section 3.2.

## 2.2 Credits and Class Periods

Most of the Japanese Language Courses offered at CEGLOC are either non-credit (i.e., Supplementary Japanese Courses) or credit via an agreement between the University of Tsukuba and the home institutions of the short-term international

students (i.e., Comprehensive Japanese Courses)<sup>5</sup>. In contrast, the EP Japanese Language Course is a required subject for the students in English medium major programs in order for them to obtain their required foreign language credits. Since the start in 2010 until the Spring term of 2019, 4.5 credits were required. From Year 10 (Fall 2019~), students are required to obtain only 4 credits. The reasons for the credit decrease will be discussed in Section 3.3.

In Tables 4a-4c, the changes in credit requirements and class periods is visualized in terms of implementation timing. From the Fall of 2010 till the Spring of 2013 (Year 1 to 3), 90 class periods of 75 minutes each were needed to obtain the required 4.5 study credits (Table 4a). The University of Tsukuba was following a trimester system at the time, with each term consisting of 10 weeks. For Year 1, the 90 class periods were divided over a ten-day summer session of 30 classes, and 10 weeks of 3 classes in both the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester. In Years 2 and 3, the summer session was discarded and replaced by 10 weeks of 3 classes per week in the 1<sup>st</sup> trimester, respectively the 1<sup>st</sup> semester of the subsequent year. In Year 1, the EP students completed all Japanese Language classes during their first term, but from Year 2, the EP Japanese Language Course was divided over the students' first and second year<sup>6</sup>.

The credit system for the EP Japanese Language Course was revised in 2013 when the 10-week trimester system changed to a 15-week semester structure, further divided into three 5-week modules (A, B, and C) (Table 4b). Through discussion with the Division of Educational Promotion, it was determined that 30 class periods would be valued at 2 credits for the EP Japanese classes. The required 4.5 study credits came to be divided over a Freshman Seminar of 8 class periods (0.5 credits) during the pre-fall period, a 10-week session of 30 class periods during Modules A and B of the fall term, and a 10-week spring session of 30 class periods (Modules A and B), for a total of 68 class periods.

Japanese Application classes (non-credit) were offered in the Fall and Spring C modules from Year 4 to Year 6 (Fall 2013~Spring 2016) to address the 22-class period loss in study time, and to bridge the time between the end of the Fall B module to Spring A module, and Spring B module to Fall A module. These classes gave students the opportunity to study an additional 30 class periods and deepen their understanding of the class content taught in the Fall and Spring AB modules. Due to budget cuts, however, these classes were discontinued from Year 7.

From the Fall term of 2019 (Year 10), the Freshman Seminar has also been

discontinued, bringing the total class periods to 60 (Table 4c).

**Table 4 Number of Required Study Credits, Class periods, and Implementation Timing**

**Table 4a: Stage 1: 4.5 credits, 90 class periods**

	Number of required credits (Class hours)		
Year	1.5 (30)	1.5 (30)	1.5 (30)
Year 1	Summer Session	2nd Trimester	3rd Trimester
Year 2	2nd Trimester	3rd Trimester	1st Trimester
Year 3	2nd Trimester	3rd Trimester	Spring Semester AB Modules

**Table 4b: Stage 2: 4.5 credits, 68 class periods**

	Number of required credits (Class hours)		
Year	0.5 (8)	2 (30)	2 (30)
Year 4~ Year 9	Freshman Seminar	Fall Semester AB Modules	Spring Semester AB Modules

**Table 4c: Stage 3: 4 credits, 60 class periods**

	Number of required credits (Class hours)	
Year	2 (30)	2 (30)
Year 10~	Fall Semester AB Modules	Spring Semester AB Modules

### 3. Coordination Challenges

The course coordinators have faced numerous challenges since the inception of the EP Japanese Language Course. Here we will address scheduling issues, discrepancies between the number of class levels and instructors, the reduction of credits and class periods and how some of these challenges have been dealt with.

#### 3.1 Scheduling Issues

In the initial stages, classes were taught on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Instructors encountered problems with student motivation and retention rates. Because classes were concentrated on the three final days of the week, the rate of submission of homework assignments was low due to students not having enough time to absorb the content taught in class and complete the related tasks at home.

Additionally, new content was to be introduced in each class, which essentially resulted in new bricks being laid upon a shaky foundation. Also, part of the content taught in class was forgotten over the weekend due to insufficient practice time spread out in a balanced manner.

In addition, the possibility of students failing classes had not been given sufficient consideration by the university administration, and no pathway was provided for students who would need to retake a class; they would have to wait for an entire year for the class to be offered again. This problem was remedied in the second year of the EP when the 7-level system was implemented, which allowed students to retake a failed class in the next term.

The course coordinator also advocated for the classes to be made part of the fixed timetable with a more even distribution throughout the week. From Year 4 (Fall 2013~), in coordination with the shift to a semester system, classes have been set on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Another concern is that the class hours differ from fall to spring term, demanding flexibility from the instructors who cannot schedule other classes during the respective hours in the other term. Requests for streamlining class hours have been brought up with the administration, but with more schools participating, such reorganization is demanding, if not impossible, especially because the EP Japanese Language Course spans over the students' freshman and sophomore year<sup>7</sup>. In their second year, in particular, students have to take a high number of major-specific subjects, leaving very few timeslots where participants of five different schools can attend Japanese classes together.

### **3.2 Class Levels, Limited Staff, and Adhoc Measures**

From Year 1 to Year 9 (Fall 2010-Spring 2019), students have been placed into appropriate class levels via a paper-based placement test. The test has always been implemented upon student arrival, usually at the start of the summer session or the Freshman Seminar. As indicated in Table 2, a minimum of two and a maximum of seven class levels per term have been available for the students. When it became clear from Year 1 that two levels were insufficient to accommodate the students' levels, two additional part-time instructors were hired, and the number of levels increased (Japanese 1 to Japanese 7). This generated a new problem: How can seven classes occupying the same time periods be taught with only four instructors? The

answer was found in having the four instructors teach Japanese 1 to Japanese 4, and “outsourcing” the higher level students; students placed in Japanese 5 to Japanese 7 participated in non-credit Supplementary Japanese Courses (SJC). As these non-credit classes were not part of the students’ fixed timetables of classes, and therefore not necessarily scheduled at the same time as the EP Japanese language courses, many difficulties arose in regard to scheduling, and also issues of educational quality and fairness. This is because, since they often had scheduling conflicts between the non-credit Japanese classes and their other classes, it was not always possible for all of the students to attend the same number of classes, or to attend classes at levels completely appropriate to their Japanese abilities. This problem was addressed by offering several different options for combining the non-credit Japanese classes with project work, which was overseen by the course coordinator (see Appendix 1 for the document explaining the options to the students involved). The course coordinator managed to do this, in addition to teaching the Japanese 1 class in person, through the use of email and personal communication with the SJC instructors, and following up on the students through the Moodle and Manaba course management systems, SNS, and so forth. This solution was only possible thanks to the cooperation of the Japanese Language Education Division in charge of SJC and the CEGLOC administration.

One concern that arose was that of students enrolling in the highest available level (Japanese 7) in the first term. In order to acquire sufficient study credits, they were exempted from the second term of EP Japanese Language classes that did not offer a level of their ability. Instead, they were required to take a content class in Japanese, which often was a burden on students who had never studied in Japanese before. Trying to avoid situations like the above, namely more levels than instructors and no higher level available in the following term, class levels were revised once more.

From Fall 2016, as described in Table 3, four levels were taught each term by the course coordinator together with three part-time instructors. This system accommodates in principle all students because the spring term offers higher level classes than the fall term.

The above, however, does not mean that four levels per term can accommodate all students in terms of class content appropriate to their proficiency. Students with lower or advanced proficiency demand special yet different attention. From the Fall of 2017, when the first cohort of the Bachelor’s Program in Global Issues started

participating, budget for an extra part-time instructor was allotted, enabling a split beginner class. Until then, the beginner class had a high number of students (25+) with varying abilities. However, from that point on, absolute beginners and false beginners (students with reading and writing ability of Hiragana and Katakana) have been separated. For the advanced students, another solution was found. For example, in the Fall of 2016, out of 60 first-year students, 54 were placed in the available four levels for regular classes. The remaining 6 students with a high Japanese proficiency had the possibility to be exempted from Japanese classes. In exchange, they would have had to attend content classes taught in Japanese. Having never taken a subject taught in Japanese, these students preferred registering for the EP Japanese Language Course. As their level was far higher than the high-intermediate class, in consultation with the Japanese Language Education Division and again with approval of the CEGLOC administration, they enrolled in two advanced SJC subjects (10 weeks x 2 classes), and were instructed online by the EP Japanese Language Course coordinator for another equivalent of 10 classes. This set of in-class and online instruction provided the advanced students with the necessary credits. This measure, ensuring Japanese language instruction fit for advanced students has been put into practice in 2016 and 2017. This method is similar to the “outsourcing” solution described above, yet it differs in that it is implemented for two consecutive terms per student, thus avoiding exemption of EP Japanese Language classes due to appropriate level unavailability in the second term. Also, the online instruction focuses on building academic skills through scaffolded reading and writing assignments, whereas during the “outsourcing,” coordinator input was mainly limited to following-up with students on their autonomous project work.

**Table 5: Overview of Actual Class Levels (Fall 2016-Spring 2018)**  
**(Table adapted from Vanbaelen (2018))**

Pre-Fall		Fall Term		Spring Term
Freshman Seminar	→	101-0 Absolute beginners EP Japanese	→	102-0
Freshman Seminar	→	101 False beginners EP Japanese	→	102
Freshman Seminar	→	201 Low intermediate EP Japanese	→	202
Freshman Seminar	→	301 Intermediate EP Japanese	→	302
Freshman Seminar	→	401 High intermediate EP Japanese	→	402
Freshman Seminar	→	401++ Advanced SJC + online instruction	→	402++

Table 5 presents an overview of the actual class levels from Fall 2016 to Spring 2018. In essence, the treatment of the advanced 401++/402++ group is similar to previous measures taken for the Japanese 5 to Japanese 7 students during Years 2 to 6, but for the fact that all students get the opportunity to obtain all required credits from language classes and not partly from content classes.

Class names have remained the same since the Fall of 2016 (Year 7), but from Year 9 (Fall 2018), class levels have become more fluid to deal with the changing student proficiencies. Due to the absence of students with a J3/J4 level<sup>8</sup>, the usual J3/J4-level 301-302 classes have been used to teach students with a J5/J6 level, and 401-402 classes have become advanced near-native classes with a focus on academic Japanese. Such adjustments, though beneficial for the students, require a high level of flexibility of the instructors.

### 3.3 Reduction of Credits and Class Periods

As described in Section 2.2, the number of class periods and required credits has been repeatedly cut down. With the shift to the semester system, class periods dropped from 90 to 68. Fortunately for the students, it did not involve a decline in credits. From the Fall of 2019, only 60 class periods are taught and only 4 credits can be acquired. This reduction happened in a reaction to a recommendation from MEXT to no longer offer 0.5 credit subjects. The reasoning behind this is to align with international standards (Council on Undergraduate Education 2017b, p13). In the case of the EP Japanese Language Course, this means that the 8-class period Freshman Seminar, worth 0.5 credits, is no longer offered from the Fall of 2019.

Besides providing a venue for implementing the paper-based placement test and carrying out class placement based on the test results, the Freshman Seminar provided a space to create a rapport between the instructors and the students, as well as to review skills and expectations necessary for a smooth start in the respective classes from the beginning of the fall term.

The most critical issue to be addressed due to the discontinuation of the Freshman Seminar was implementation of the placement test. In June 2019, a message was sent to prospective students to take an online placement test. They all received the link to the “Tsukuba Test Battery of Japanese,” <http://ttbj-tsukuba.org/>, an online test developed by Takako Sakai and her co-researchers (Sakai 2019), and were requested to send their results to the course coordinator. Absolute beginners were strongly encouraged to learn the Hiragana and Katakana syllabaries through self-study. To this aim, the course coordinator sent several links to internet self-study resources. By the beginning of August 2019, all students submitted their placement test results and were placed into their respective levels. During the semi-annual faculty development meeting of the Japanese Language Education Division, all EP Japanese Language Course instructors were informed of the students’ results to prepare classes accordingly. At the time of writing, however, classes have yet to start, and as such, it is unclear if the placement test results reflect students’ actual abilities or if changes to other levels will be necessary.

## 4. Student Needs

Adjustments in class levels described in Section 3.2 were always triggered by student needs, that is, throughout the years, the EP Japanese Language Course

has tried to cater to the differing proficiencies of the new students arriving each year. Examples include a split beginner class, special attendance to high-advanced students as well as class level fluidity.

Learning Japanese is not the first priority, however, of most of the English medium major students; they are primarily concerned with passing the subjects of their majors. That being said, in interactions between students and the authors, students have, however, indicated that they do feel the need to learn Japanese. In addition, they have indicated they want to learn more about Japanese culture, and unfortunately, that they feel left out of the Japanese community on campus. The EP Japanese Language Course has attempted to fill some of the gaps by implementing classes with a cultural focus and others with cross-cultural activities.

As mentioned above, the Freshman Seminar was also meant to provide a space for creating a rapport between the participants. In the spring of 2017, one of the part-time instructors had asked to allot part of the budget for a tea ceremony in one of her classes. It was then agreed upon that the budget should be used equally for all classes. The idea to implement cultural activities as part of language learning was welcomed by all instructors, and during the Freshman Seminar of 2017, two periods were set aside to allow all classes to participate in a tea ceremony conducted by tea master Soushun Nakajima and her disciples. Depending on the students' abilities, the tea master provided explanation in Japanese or in English. Students responded positively, and in 2018 this activity was repeated. Other cultural activities implemented by individual instructors include Japanese *karuta* ("card") games, and *owarai* ("comedy") experiences.

Giving students a taste of Japanese culture can be done in many ways. Connecting them with the Japanese community on campus is more challenging. In the Fall of 2017, the course coordinator was in charge of the absolute beginner Japanese class, and with an instructor of an advanced Integrated English class, brought the said classes together during three class periods. The goal was to bring students together in a stress-free bilingual environment in order to promote cross-cultural contact. Students interacted (mostly) in the language of their choice through ice-breakers, games, interviews and skit preparation. A follow-up survey indicated positive outcomes such as a sense of learning together and improving communication skills (Vanbaelen and Ide 2018). This three-period project was repeated in the Fall term of 2018 with the participation of all EP Japanese Language course instructors, and

resulted in similar positive outcomes.

## 5. Conclusion

Over the 10 years of its existence, the EP Japanese language course has undergone a continuing metamorphosis in its structure, that is, the number of participating Schools, participants, and instructors involved, as well as in class levels and periods offered. While a number of these changes can be said to have been for the better, and to have been motivated by an attention to student needs, other changes were made obligatory due to budget cuts or administrative concerns not focused on the immediate interests of the students. In the future, it is likely that the program will continue to evolve and change as the university struggles to come to terms with the decreasing population of young people in Japan by seeking to supplement attendance rates through increasing the number of non-Japanese students.

To provide relevant and high-quality Japanese language education to students in English medium majors, the course coordinators will need to continuously evaluate the course learning objectives and determine class levels and learning outcomes. A step in that direction will be the future implementation of the above mentioned online test (TTBJ) at the end of each term to track student improvement.

## Notes

1. This report is partly based on “A Decade of Japanese Language Classes for English Medium Majors”, presented by the authors at the 18th Hawaii International Conference on Education, Jan 4-7, 2020.
2. The Globalization Hub Development Project (国際化拠点整備事業, Kokusaika Kyoten Seibi Jigyō, project name translated by the authors from Japanese to English) provided financial support during a period of five years for the participating institutions (JSPS 2009).
3. Japanese names and English readings are only provided when deemed absolutely necessary.
4. Refer to Bushnell (2012, 2013) for complete early-year developments.
5. For details about the respective courses and changes throughout the years, refer to Kano (2013).
6. The English medium major programs start in the fall term, unlike Japanese medium major programs that follow the traditional Japanese start of the academic

year in April. The fall term start accommodates students from European, African and North American countries, and some Asian countries. Providing a similar academic calendar that starts in the fall avoids students having a gap between graduation from high school in their home country and entering university in Japan.

7. At the University of Tsukuba, an academic year consists of a spring and fall term. With the EP students starting their university career in the fall term, the spring term in the consecutive academic year is often considered as part of their sophomore year, although it is only their second term at the university.
8. The “J” levels refer to the class levels used in the Supplementary and Comprehensive Japanese Courses offered at CEGLOC, with J1 indicating a beginner level and J8 an intermediate-advanced level.

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## Appendix 1

### G30 Japanese V～VII

#### **Fall and Spring Semester AB Modules, Various times and classrooms / online**

##### **Description:**

The defining characteristic of the fall and spring semester G30 Japanese V～VII classes is that they are designed to be customized to the Japanese language learning needs of individual students. We have no set timetable. In other words, what days/times you study Japanese will vary according to the individual student. You will use the Skill-based Japanese language classes at the International Student Center (ISC). You may attend classes that correspond to your level, in consultation with me. The ISC classes include grammar, speaking, listening, reading, writing, and kanji, so you can attend classes according to your Japanese learning needs. You must enroll in at least 2 of these classes. If you want to enroll in more than 2 classes, this is possible, but please be aware that only up to 2 of the classes can be counted towards your grades/credits. **Please refer to the schedule of ISC classes for times and locations.**

### **About Project Work:**

There may be some rare cases where there are no Japanese classes possible for you to take (for example, all of the classes at your level conflict with other classes you must take for your major). In such a case, you will complete a project that spans the entire term. Possible projects are as follows:

**Project I** : Students will gather information about student circles/clubs at the university. Then 3 or more focal circles/clubs must be selected. Students will gather more detailed information while actually observing the activities of the circle/club. Finally, students will prepare a report based on their findings.

**Project II** : Students will select a circle/club, and join the club as an official member. The project culminates with the writing of a report based on experiences gained through participation.

**Project III** : This is a customized project. It is planned and carried out entirely by the student. Before you can select this project, you must first submit a detailed project plan to the JPC explaining your project and its learning goals. Not all project proposals will be accepted!

The goal of this project work is to expand your abilities to use Japanese in real situations. Engaging in these projects will require you to interact with Japanese students, and collect, organize, and synthesize various types of information in Japanese. Each project culminates in a report (written in Japanese, of course!).

### **Grading Requirements:**

Performance in ISC classes (you must take at least 2; if you do more than 2, I select your best 2 grades): 60%

Online portion (participation in peer response, completion of reading and writing assignments, etc.): 40%