

Japanese 05
Communicating in Sophisticated Japanese
Amherst College

Course Instructor

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Course Description

The objective of this course is to complete the acquisition of basic structures of Japanese. The course will emphasize the development of all four skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) at a more complex, multi-paragraph level. For example, students will be trained to speak more spontaneously and with cultural appropriateness in given situations using concrete as well as abstract expressions on a sustained level of conversation. As for literacy, students will be given practice reading and writing using several hundred characters (*Kanji*).

Course Objectives

At Amherst, it takes four semesters before you master the following:

1. most of the essential structures of Japanese;
2. several hundred Kanji for writing and an additional few hundred for reading (the government identifies roughly 2,000 to learn before graduating from high school; so the more one learns the better);
3. being able to engage in different kinds of conversations (some practical and some abstract) comfortably in Japanese;
4. being able to read and write cohesive paragraphs in Japanese;
5. being able to read different kinds of materials independently with the aid of dictionaries and instructors.

In the first four semesters, we will focus on the foundation building by introducing the student to all the basic structures by speaking and listening in Japanese, and by having them recognize as many characters as possible.

Required books

1. *Japanese Stage-Step Course: Grammar Textbook: Grammar-Reference* (Wako Tawa, 2009)
2. *The Japanese Stage-Step Course: Workbook 2*: (Wako Tawa, 2009)
3. *Japanese: A Stage Step Method: Writing Practice Book* (Wako Tawa, 2009)
Available at Amherst Books, www.amherstbooks.com, 8 Main St Amherst, (413) 256-1547 or any other bookstores.

On-line Learning Tools

The following site gives you:

- (1) some useful learning tools for Japanese as well as
- (2) instructions for setting up your computer so that you can use it to read and write in Japanese.

https://www.amherst.edu/offices/it/teaching_research/resources/languages/japanese

Course Organization

Monday	(1) test or (2) kanji quiz and assignment (see detailed schedule on CMS).
Tuesday	The class meets in Webster 101. New material will be introduced. Students are expected to read the material (Grammar Textbook) to be covered in class before coming to the class. We do not expect the students to have learned the new vocabulary for this class.
Wednesday	Small group practice sessions will be held (Webster 115). The material introduced on the previous day, Tuesday, will be practiced in small groups. Students are expected to have reviewed the Tuesday material (Workbook) and have learned the new vocabulary before coming to this class.
Thursday	The class meets in Webster 101. New material will be introduced. Students are expected to read the material (Grammar Textbook) to be covered in class before coming to the class. We do not expect the students to have learned the new vocabulary for this class.
Friday	Small group practice sessions will be held (Webster 115). The material introduced on the previous day, Thursday, will be practiced in small groups. Students are expected to have reviewed the Thursday material (Workbook) and have learned the new vocabulary before coming to this class.

• **Division of Large and Practice sessions:**

The Japanese courses numbered 01 through 06 (sometimes even in Japanese 11-12) have large classes and small practice sessions. There is a good reason for us to have the two different classes. In the large classes, the students learn new material, which they learn how to use in the small practice sessions.

• **Practice session time (Wednesday and Friday):**

Please sign up for one of the following sessions the first week or so. We will then make a permanent session for everyone. Once we make the permanent schedule for the practice sessions, all students must stay in the same sessions.

1. 9:00 - 9:50
2. 10:00 - 10:50
3. 11:00 - 11:50
4. 1:00 - 1:50
5. 2:00 - 2:50
6. 3:00 - 3:50

Grade Distribution

Attendance (Class/Practice Session)	10 %
Practice Session Performance	10 %
Assignments (quantity/quality)	15 %
3 written tests	30 %
3 oral tests	10%
Written final	15%
Kanji writing	5%
Effort	5%

Final Written Examination: 12/18 (Sat.) – 12/22 (Wed.): Self-scheduled examination at a designated time and place by the college (will be announced in the **Registrar's website** – it is the student's responsibility to check this information).

IMPORTANT: For five-college interchange students: Unfortunately the academic calendar of the five-colleges is not uniform. It is our expectation, however, that all students who take Japanese at Amherst will follow the Amherst calendar, including the final examination schedule as well as the daily schedule. To be fair to other students, we will NOT be able to make special arrangements for the final examinations for the five-college students.

Policies

Being successful in a Japanese language class requires going to every class, participating fully, meeting deadlines for frequent assignments and preparing thoroughly for quizzes and classes. And no delays are allowed for any quizzes and tests, including the final written examination or the final oral presentation. We understand, however, that keeping up with frequent requirements for a Japanese class may be difficult at times. We have therefore made the following policies to have a little more flexibility. **Other exceptions can be made only with the class Dean's or your doctor's note.**

1. Attendance

- Tardiness is penalized.
- It is **not** possible to give a make-up class or practice session to a student who was absent. It is your responsibility to check the daily schedule and to know what you have missed with your classmate(s). Please do not ask your instructor if you have missed anything important when you were absent because the answer is always YES. If you have **specific questions**, we would be happy to meet with you at our offices.

2. Practice Session Performance

- Each Practice session is evaluated and graded.
- **Sit-in Option:**
 - (1) The students have to come to a practice session, but do not participate in a session. This means that the students sit in the back and learn by observing what other students are doing in a session. When the students choose to use this option, let the instructor know prior to a session. When the instructor finds that a student is not prepared enough, she may recommend her or him to take this option during a practice session.
 - (2) The students can use this option **twice** this semester without any penalty. This means that the first two use of this option will not affect the grade on “Practice session performance” and the students receive an attendance credit. This option will not apply

when the students are absent from a session. From the third time on, the students still receive an attendance credit, but no points will be given for “Practice session performance” on that day.

3. Assignments

- **Weekly assignments are due Tuesday, 1 pm.** (Monday submission is appreciated.) We allow each student to submit two assignments late per semester, but the late assignments must be completed by Thursday 1 pm (same week).
- Your assignment will be given points (0 ~ 20). **Correction**, when required, **is due Thursday, 1 pm.** Some points may be added to the original grade, and the number of point depends on the quality of corrections.

4. Written Tests

- No make-up test will be given under any circumstances, but the students will have **an option of correcting any test**; in this case, some points may be added to the original grade, and the number of point depends on the quality of corrections.

5. Kanji quizzes

- Every week, you have to complete a kanji quiz in Webster 114 before Tuesday 1 pm. (You may take it on Monday 9 – 5 and Tuesday 9 – 1)
- Practice 15 kanji in each section and submit the Writing Practice Book in Thursday class. For Kanji quiz, practice kanji words in “Example” in sentences at the end of each section. (See Daily Schedule.)
- If you want to complete more Kanji quizzes each week, you may do so. Please talk to the instructor.
- No kanji quiz when written test is scheduled.

Schedules Check CMS daily for detailed schedule.

- **Tentative written test dates:**

Monday, 9/27

Monday, 10/25

Monday, 11/29

- **Tentative oral test dates:**

Wednesday, 10/13

Wednesday, 11/10

Wednesday, 12/15

Recommendations

- **Studying and practicing regularly is the single most important requirement for learning Japanese well for the course.** We have observed over and over again a strong correlation between steady study habits and performance in this class: we have **never** met a student who did well in this course without attending classes and practice sessions regularly. On the other hand, everyone who takes attendance seriously does well in the course.
- **Use Japanese as much as possible in all sessions.**
- **Communicate with your instructor regularly** via any method you may have: e-mail, phone, office visit, etc. Everyone has problems in learning Japanese. Silence or absence from classes is not an effective way to communicate your issues. No problem is a small problem. We deal with every issue seriously, so please bring any issues you have to us as soon and as often as possible.

Things to remember in practice sessions

- ✓ **The students are required to study the material BEFORE coming to each practice session so that the practice sessions will move smoothly and meaningfully.**
- ✓ **Come to every practice session.** This is probably the most important way to participate in class and learn.
- ✓ **No English is allowed as soon as you enter your practice session.** Japanese should be used among the students in the room as well as with the teacher. Imagine the situation where you are among people who speak no English in Japan. You do have to speak Japanese to communicate. Your teacher or an English-speaking person will not be able to accompany you everywhere you go in Japan.
- ✓ Please avoid any grammar questions. If you must ask, wait until the session is over. When you have other questions (such as a meaning of a certain word), ask in Japanese.
- ✓ **Do not be afraid to make mistakes.** We will **not** take any points off for mistakes in the practice sessions. It is natural to make more mistakes when you speak more.
- ✓ Do not take it personally when corrected. **Being corrected is one of the best ways to learn to speak.** In fact, you must get used to being corrected all the time.