

Japanese Studies at Miami University of Ohio

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Miami University

Founded in 1809, Miami University of Ohio is recognized as one of the most outstanding undergraduate public institutions in the United States. Miami University has a student population of 19,000 and effectively combines a wide range of strong academic programs with the personal attention ordinarily found only at much smaller institutions. The institution is widely recognized as a Public Ivy, a public university that provides “an Ivy League collegiate experience at a public school price.”¹

The city of Oxford, the hometown of Miami University’s main campus, is located in the southwest corner of Ohio, one hour by car from Cincinnati or Dayton. Oxford was named the nation’s Best College Town in a study conducted by WalletHub and cited by Forbes in December 2016 (<https://www.forbes.com/sites/karstenstrauss/2016/12/13/the-best-and-worst-college-towns-in-the-u-s/#33031fc4ee1>). While Oxford is a college town, Ohio has a variety of Japanese businesses. Chief among them is a large Honda plant (and just across the border in adjacent Kentucky there is a large Toyota plant). As the attached Appendix 1 provided by the Japanese Consulate in Detroit in 2017 reveals, Japan is Ohio’s leading foreign investor with 484 Japanese owned facilities. “The majority of Japanese facilities (271) are manufacturers, 50% of which are automotive-related. There are 108 commercial trade operations, accounting for 22% of all facilities.” These facilities provide 77,073 direct jobs in Ohio—the highest state total in the Midwest. 98% of jobs at Japanese businesses in Ohio are held by local residents, 57% of which are in manufacturing. Southwest Ohio houses Japanese businesses in a diverse range of sectors including chemicals, pharmaceuticals and rubber.

With that in mind, I will discuss below Japanese Studies at Miami University where I have been working since 1997 as an example of what I perceive to be recent trends in Japanese Studies in the U.S.

1 According to the 2018 *U.S. News & World Report*, for example, Miami University is the highest ranking public university in the U.S. in the category of “Strong Commitment to Undergraduate Teaching.”

History of Teaching Japanese and the Department of German, Russian, Asian, and Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures (GRAMELAC)

The teaching of Japanese at Miami University dates back to 1942 and was originally a student initiative. The first Japanese courses were taught as non-credit courses by a Hawaiian student stranded in Oxford after the attack on Pearl Harbor. By 1964, Japanese language and literature courses were consolidated with the Chinese to form the East Asian Languages and Literatures Department. In 1972, the East Asian Languages and Literatures Department joined the German and Russian language and literature classes to form the Department of German, Russian, and East Asian Languages (GREAL). The Korean language was added to GREAL's offerings in 1988. In 2014 the department's name was changed to German, Russian, Asian, and Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures (GRAMELAC) to more accurately reflect its offerings. As of the fall of 2018 GRAMELAC offers seven languages: Arabic, Chinese, German, Hebrew, Japanese, Korean, and Russian, and houses three majors—East Asian Languages and Cultures; German; and Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies—plus one co-major—Critical and Classical Languages and Cultures.

The Japanese Program and Enrollment

The Japanese program serves Miami University in various capacities. The program enables a large number of students to complete their College of Arts and Science language requirement; plays an important role in the University-wide requirements; and offers a well-subscribed minor and major. The Japanese minor has been in existence since 1990, and in 2005 an East Asian Languages and Culture (EALC) major with a Japan concentration² was approved and the first EALC major students graduated in 2007. In the spring of 2018 we have approximately 35–40 EALC majors with a Japan concentration and over 60 Japanese minors. This is strongly related to a surge in Chinese students' taking Japanese language and culture courses.

Miami University accepts many qualified international students, including a large number from China. The growth of international students was gradual until 2008, when Miami saw a noticeable increase in international students and the

2 East Asian Languages and Cultures major has two options for focus: China or Japan. EALC had originally three foci: China, Japan, or China-Japan combination. But because the number of majors focusing on China-Japan combination was low, the combination focus was eliminated in 2014.

number has rapidly grown since then. A major factor may be China's fantastic economic growth. In 2010 China became the world's second largest economy, surpassing hitherto number-two Japan. Interestingly, we see the Japanese language classes at Miami have increased in part because Chinese students, the leading number of Japanese learners worldwide, are enrolling in Miami Japanese program. According to The Japan Foundation survey conducted in 2015, among the language learners of Japanese in the world, the Chinese people number the most, 953,283, followed by Indonesian, 745,125, and Koreans, 556,237.³

In 1997 when I arrived at Miami University, the Japanese program had two tenure-track/tenured faculty members and one part-time instructor offering 6–7 classes per semester with an annual enrollment of 167. With an augmentation of Chinese students in the Japanese language courses, we started to average 250 students per year in the late 2000s. First-year Japanese courses are particularly popular and the number of sections increased from 3 sections to 4 in 2012, and then to 5 in 2014. The Japanese program continues to attract many Chinese students, with an enrollment of 424 in the academic year of 2017–2018. As the attached Appendix 2 provided by the Japanese Consulate in Detroit shows, the number of Japanese learners at Miami University in the fall of 2018 was second highest among state universities and colleges in Ohio. In recent years, Miami University's Japanese program has regularly offered 11–13 classes per semester, taught by 4–5 faculty members. Currently it offers an average of five sections of first-year Japanese per semester that enroll an average of 23–25 students⁴ and three sections of second-year Japanese per semester, with an average enrollment of 18, and starting in the fall of 2018, two sections of third-year Japanese per semester, with an average enrollment of 22. Below are the enrollment figures and course offerings in the last five academic years plus 1997–1998, the year I came to Miami University:

3 Kaigai Kōryū Kikin, ed., *Kaigai no Nihongo kyōiku no genjō: 2015 nendo Nihongo kyōiku kikan chōsa yori* 海外の日本語教育の現状 2015年度日本語教育機関調査より (Tokyo: The Japan Foundation, 2017), 12.

4 This number far exceeds the optimal class size of 15 for a foreign language course. The Association of Departments of Foreign Languages (ADFL), in its guidelines for second-language teaching, “reaffirms its position that the maximum class size for foreign language instruction in classes where all four skills are equally stressed should not exceed twenty. We hold that the optimum class size is fifteen.” “ADFL Guidelines for Class Size and Workload for College and University Teachers of Foreign Languages,” *ADFL Bulletin*, vol. 40, nos. 2-3 (Winter-Spring 2009): 92–92 (1).

Japanese Language and Culture Course Enrollment Figures by academic year
(see Appendix 3 for the entire figures and graph since 1997)

2017–2018	249	175	424
2016–2017	200	175	375
2015–2016	219	129	348
2014–2015	197	146	343
2013–2014	154	142	296
1997–1998	86	81	167

Japanese Language and Culture Course Enrollment Figures by semester & course

2017–2018 (*number of sections)

FALL		SPRING	
JPN 101 First-year Japanese (5)	107	JPN 102 First-year Japanese (4)	69
JPN 201 Second-year Japanese (3)	51	JPN 202 Second-year Japanese (3)	47
JPN 301 Third-year Japanese	23	JPN 302 Third-year Japanese	22
JPN 401 Fourth-year Japanese	18	JPN 402 Fourth-year Japanese	17
JPN 231 Japanese Tales of the Supernatural	24	JPN 381 Intro. to Japanese Linguistics	20
JPN 260C Japanese Civilization	26		
TOTAL	249		175

2016–2017

FALL		SPRING	
JPN 101 First-year Japanese (5)	106	JPN 102 First-year Japanese (4)	72
JPN 201 Second-year Japanese (2)	37	JPN 202 Second-year Japanese (2)	37
JPN 301 Third-year Japanese	17	JPN 302 Third-year Japanese	12
JPN 401 Fourth-year Japanese	14	JPN 402 Fourth-year Japanese	8
JPN 231 Japanese Tales of the Supernatural	26	JPN 260E Japanese Pop Culture	28
		JPN 266 Survey of Japanese Cinema	18
Total	200		175

2015–2016

FALL		SPRING	
JPN 101 First-year Japanese (6)	126	JPN 102 First-year Japanese (4)	52
JPN 201 Second-year Japanese (2)	36	JPN 202 Second-year Japanese (2)	29
JPN 301 Third-year Japanese	24	JPN 302 Third-year Japanese	15
JPN 401 Fourth-year Japanese	12	JPN 402 Fourth-year Japanese	12
JPN 255 Drama in Chinese and Japanese	18	JPN 260C Japanese Civilization	21
Total	216		129

2014–2015

FALL		SPRING	
JPN 101 First-year Japanese (5)	96	JPN 102 First-year Japanese (4)	49
JPN 201 Second-year Japanese (2)	40	JPN 202 Second-year Japanese (2)	35
JPN 301 Third-year Japanese	23	JPN 302 Third-year Japanese	16
JPN 401 Fourth-year Japanese	13	JPN 402 Fourth-year Japanese	8
JPN 231 Japanese Tales of the Supernatural	25	JPN 260B Modern Japanese Literature	18
		JPN 279 Buddhism and Culture	20
Total	197		146

2013–2014

FALL		SPRING	
JPN 101 First-year Japanese (3)	69	JPN 102 First-year Japanese (3)	56
JPN 201 Second-year Japanese (2)	38	JPN 202 Second-year Japanese (2)	37
JPN 301 Third-year Japanese	18	JPN 302 Third-year Japanese	17
JPN 401 Fourth-year Japanese	9	JPN 402 Fourth-year Japanese	10
JPN 279 Buddhism and Culture	20	JPN 266 Survey of Japanese Cinema	22
Total	154		142

1997–1998

FALL		SPRING	
JPN 101 First-year Japanese (3)	54	JPN 102 First-year Japanese (2)	33
JPN 201 Second-year Japanese	8	JPN 202 Second-year Japanese	9
JPN 301 Third-year Japanese	15	JPN 302 Third-year Japanese	12
JPN 401 Fourth-year Japanese	4	JPN 402 Fourth-year Japanese	2
JPN 282 Japanese Language & Culture	4	JPN 260 Topics in Japanese Literature	25
Total	86		81

As the numbers above indicate, the retention rate from JPN 101 to JPN 102 is not very high. JPN 101 sections are overwhelmingly Chinese students and regularly start at over-capacity and force-add requests. Many Chinese students take Japanese language because they are interested in Japanese language and culture, but we believe that some students think Japanese may be easy for them because the Japanese written language uses *kanji* (Chinese characters). Upon enrollment, however, with quizzes and homework in every class plus exams and essays, drilling with the four skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing, they find it otherwise. Further, when the program can offer two literature/culture courses compared with just one course, the enrollment increases. The Japanese pop culture course is particularly popular among learners of Japanese language. Indeed, many students of Japanese learners are interested in Japanese pop culture.

In the 1990's, many students taking Japanese language classes were interested in business, especially related to electronics and auto industries. Ezra Vogel's book *Japan as Number One* (1979) by Harvard University Press was still influential, even though by the 1990's Japan's economy had stagnated. Since then, however, the student interest in taking Japanese has shifted from business to Japanese pop culture. This is a nationwide trend. According to the survey in 2015–2016 by Amanda Rollins, Program Coordinator for Japanese language education programs at the Japan Foundation, Los Angeles, "Interest in Japanese pop culture (anime/manga) has become the most popular reason to study Japanese for learners, followed by interest in Japanese language and then in culture (history, literature, art)."⁵ Many of our Japanese majors or minors want to be translators of anime, manga, and TV drama. Japanese soft capital greatly influences the number of enrollments.

Decreasing Number of Faculty Specializing in Japan at Miami University

While the increase in Japanese enrollment is heavily influenced by the Chinese students, China's economic power has had much stronger impact on the Chinese program, a partner of the Japanese program in the EALC major. It has grown significantly in the past 20 years. In 1997 there was only one Chinese faculty member who taught 6 courses a year with an enrollment of 60. Currently the Chinese Program consistently offers 14–15 classes taught by 5–6 faculty members with an enrollment of 240 per semester, but at its peak in the fall semester of 2013, the Chinese program offered 21 classes with an enrollment of 355.

In fact it was not only within the GRAMELAC Chinese program, but as a university-wide response to the expanding economic and political influence of China, hiring of faculty specializing in China occurred. This has had an interesting impact on the Japanese curriculum of EALC major with Japan focus. EALC major requirements in both the China and Japan concentrations, consist of three tiers: 1. language requirements; 2. literature and culture requirements offered by our programs (Chinese or Japanese) within GRAMELAC; and 3. related course hours offered outside of GRAMELAC. In the third tier, while the number of China-related courses has increased, that of the Japan related courses has steadily declined because departing or

5 *The Japan Foundation Survey on Japanese Language Education Institutions 2015: U.S. Data* (The Japan Foundation, Los Angeles, 2017), 10. Also see Richard Torrance, "Japanese Studies and Area Studies at the Ohio State University," in *Sekai no nihon kenkyū 2017 世界の日本研究 2017*, edited by Nanyan Guo 郭南燕 (Kyoto: International Research Center for Japanese Studies, 2017), 152.

retiring faculty specializing in either Japan or Japan and China have been replaced by either China or other specialty scholars—or not replaced at all.⁶ Since mid-2000, professors who could teach Japan related courses in the departments of Sociology, Religion, Political Science, Art, and Architecture have retired and the number who could teach Japan-related courses was at one point reduced to one—a Chinese professor who can teach modern Japanese history. Depletion of the ranks of faculty simultaneously reduced the number of courses available to EALC majors with a Japanese concentration in the third tier. The Chair of GRAMELAC has been extremely supportive and responsive, and she has asked the Chairs of other departments to consider offering Japan-related courses. Fortunately, the Anthropology department responded to our pleas and created a popular course, “Pokémon: Local and Global Cultures.” Now, however, we have learned the Chinese history professor retires at the end of Fall Semester 2018, heavily affecting not only the Japanese program but Chinese program as well. To sustain programs, university-wide curricular support is critical.

Future Plans and Prospects of Japanese Studies

In spite of a robust enrollment, the Japanese program can regularly offer only one (and a maximum of two) literature or culture courses (i.e., selected tier, selected courses), because the program has to offer a large number of language classes and staffing is limited. Bright news in this time of budgetary constraint is that the persistent effort of the Chair of GRAMELAC made it possible to obtain a lecturer position for the Japanese program. With a new continuing faculty who was formerly a visiting instructor, the Japanese program has secured a higher level of continuity and stability. Utilizing the lecturer’s expertise, the program will be able to offer a Japanese course on business or business translation that will give our students an additional path for career/internship. As the number of Chinese students who want to major or minor in Japanese increases, so do the requests to study Japanese in Japan during the summer. The Japanese faculty members are working on the creation of a summer program in Japan to accommodate such students’ needs.

6 Once Miami boasted small classes but currently a class with an enrollment less than ten is cancelled. It has become a new norm that once a faculty member retires, the line is not replaced unless the line has a dire need. Having said that, while a host of other state universities in Ohio have struggled in the face of budget cuts and elimination of departments, Miami University is doing well in spite of Ohio state funding being reduced to 10 percent of the whole university budget in 2017–2018.

Further, through the Office of Global Initiatives, Miami University is going to implement a dual-degree program with Kansai Gaidai University (KGU), one of Miami University's oldest official exchange programs. Miami University students who spend their junior year in Kansai Gaidai University studying Japanese and Japan-related subjects can earn both Miami University and Kansai Gaidai University credits towards graduation at both institutions. This dual-degree program would serve as an excellent opportunity for students who want to immerse themselves longer term in Japanese language and culture with broader Japanese related course options and seek employment globally with dual degrees from the two different countries. With these exciting plans and projects on hand, the Japanese program, though small, remains strong. The number of enrollment for Japanese courses is expected to stay healthy for a foreseeable future.

It is a general trend in higher education that high-demand career paths such as engineer and business are more emphasized. The humanities seem to take a back seat, even though "When you cut the humanities, what you lose is the human."⁷ Miami University is fortunate to have an excellent Humanities Center in the College of Arts and Science, dispatching cutting edge intellectual trends in the humanities to faculty and students. We teach our students critical thinking, understanding context, engaging with other learners, and reflecting and action, core elements of liberal education. Having said that, as Richard Torrance of the Ohio State University says on the employment of possibilities for students of Japanese studies, "it is probably wise to advice undergraduates and graduate students to be flexible and attempt to master more than one discipline."⁸ The majority of our Japanese majors have more than one major and we encourage our students to explore various opportunities. Miami University provides both career and internship counselling. By the time they graduate, students are equipped with language skills and cultural knowledge, and equally importantly skills of critical thinking and engaging with other people, ready to launch a career of their choice. Our alumni with Japanese majors and minors are active in the fields of education, government, and international business among others.

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7 Cynthia Nazarian, "When you cut the humanities, what you lose is the human," *The Hill*, April 5, 2018. <http://thehill.com/opinion/education/381677-when-you-cut-the-humanities-what-you-lose-is-the-human>. Accessed June 17, 2018.

8 Torrance, "Japanese Studies and Area Studies at the Ohio State University," in *Sekai no nihon kenkyū 2017*, edited by Nanyan Guo, 157.

2017 Japanese Direct Investment Survey: Summary of Ohio Results (as of October 1, 2017)

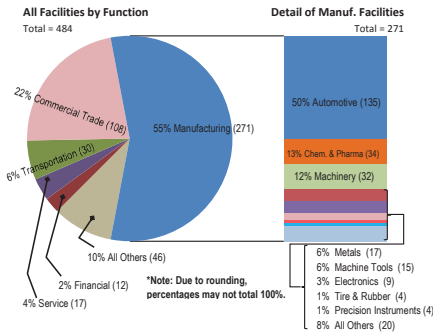
The Consulate General of Japan in Detroit annually surveys Japanese-owned facilities and Japanese nationals in Ohio. As the 2017 data indicate, Japanese investment contributes significantly to state and local economies

- 484 Japanese owned facilities in Ohio
- 77,073 direct jobs; highest total in the Midwest
- Annual employment growth since 2010
- Japan remains Ohio's leading foreign investor

FACILITIES

The majority of Japanese facilities (271) are manufacturers, 50% of which are automotive-related. There are 108 commercial trade operations, accounting for 22% of all facilities.

Figure 1: Japanese Facilities by Sector



GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Central Ohio's 139 facilities, which provide 31,415 (40% of total) jobs, are mostly automotive production related. Other areas of the state, such as the southwest and northeast, are home to Japanese businesses in a diverse range of sectors including chemicals, pharmaceuticals and rubber.

Figure 3: Japanese Investment by Region (Top Counties)

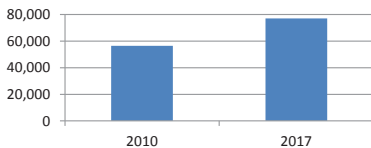
Region	Facilities	Total Employees	Manufacturing Employees
Central	139	31,415	14,655
• Franklin County	87	6,236	2,152
• Union County	15	10,185	3,380
Southwest	106	7,005	3,147
• Hamilton County	54	2,338	619
Northeast	100	8,033	3,390
• Cuyahoga County	42	2,137	425
Northwest	49	9,931	7,550
• Hancock County	10	2,553	1,784
Western	78	19,449	13,644
• Montgomery County	17	3,387	2,431
Southeast	11	1,222	648

**Note: Due to privacy requests, some facilities may not be included in this chart.*

EMPLOYMENT

98% of jobs at Japanese businesses in Ohio are held by local residents, 57% of which are in manufacturing. Total employment has grown 36% since the Great Recession, surpassing the pre-recession peak in 2012 and continuing to grow in the years since.

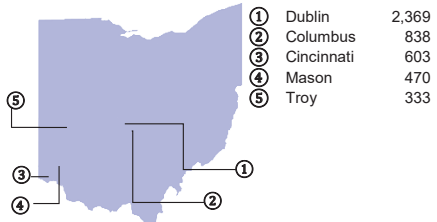
Figure 2: 2010 v. 2017 Employment Comparison



JAPANESE POPULATION

As of January 2018, there are 13,564 Japanese nationals in Ohio, most of whom reside in the central region of the state.

Figure 4: Japanese Population (Top 5 Cities)



Japanese Education in Ohio

23 Universities and Community Colleges (Fall 2018)			
City	University	Japanese language courses	
		Total students enrolled	Total number of classes
Columbus	Ohio State University	365	24
Oxford	Miami University	210	11
Toledo	University of Toledo	178	15
Cincinnati	University of Cincinnati	171	11
Kent	Kent State University	158	10
Athens	Ohio University	140	8
Cleveland	Case Western Reserve University	133	11
Alliance	University of Mount Union	102	5
Oberlin	Oberlin College	95	9
Columbus	Columbus State Community College	87	4
Bowling Green	Bowling Green State University	85	4
Akron	University of Akron	80	4
Granville	Denison University	35	2
Cleveland	Cuyahoga Community College	34	2
Delaware	Ohio Wesleyan University	32	3
University Heights	John Carroll University	32	4
Gambier	Kenyon College	31	3
Cincinnati	Xavier University	29	2
Springfield	Wittenberg University	25	4
Findlay	University of Findlay	23	4
Dayton	Sinclair Community College	20	1
Dayton	Wright State University	15	1
Yellow Springs	Antioch College	9	2
TOTALS		2,089	144

K-12 Schools (Fall 2018)		
	Total Number of Schools	Total students enrolled
	23	1,168
High School	14	773
Elementary and Middle School	9	395

Japanese Language and Culture Course Enrollment Figures since 1997

	Fall	Spring	Academic year
2017–2018	249	175	424
2016–2017	200	175	375
2015–2016	219	129	348
2014–2015	197	146	343
2013–2014	154	142	296
2012–2013	155	83	238
2011–2012	140	108	248
2010–2011	139	119	258
2009–2010	151	119	270
2008–2009	126	137	263
2007–2008	113	129	242
2006–2007	133	117	250
2005–2006	121	86	207
2004–2005	99	100	199
2003–2004	100	73	173
2002–2003	83	143	226
2001–2002	115	146	261
2000–2001	63	132	195
1999–2000	85	70	155
1998–1999	95	81	176
1997–1998	86	81	167

