

Frequently Asked Questions (UPDATED: 8/15/2025)

Q: I don't have any experience teaching Japanese, and I didn't study this field in college. Will it be difficult for me to be accepted into the program?

A: There are students who have neither an undergraduate degree related to teaching languages nor teaching experience but are still accepted into the program. However, it is crucial that you explain your motivation for participating in the program, your future plans, career goals, etc. in your hand-written statement of purpose, which is required to apply to the program.

Q: How much is tuition for the M.A. program?

A: Tuition for 2026 will be finalized in March of 2026. Typically, tuition increases by 5% each year. In 2025, the tuition was \$20,274. In addition, there are other charges, such as Facility and Health Service fees. Unfortunately, there are no scholarships available for this program.

******On rare occasions, students will choose to complete the M.A. program over the course of four summers (instead of the usual three summers). In this case, the student may take one Pedagogy course (Elementary or Intermediate/Advanced) during one summer and complete the remaining courses over the three additional summers. The tuition for one of the three summers will be decreased to reflect the fact that the student has already paid for a Pedagogy course.

Q: I would like to take the three-week Pedagogy course as a non-degree student. Can I take the Elementary Pedagogy course this summer? How much is tuition?

A: The tuition was \$6,874 for the three-week pedagogy course in 2025. Again, it increases by about 5% each year. Please note that international students cannot participate as non-degree students since they are not qualified for I-20 and cannot apply for student F-1 visas.

Q: When are Elementary and Intermediate/Advanced Pedagogy courses offered? Also, in what cycle are the other M.A. courses scheduled?

A: Elementary and Intermediate/Advanced Pedagogy courses are offered alternately every year. The Elementary course is scheduled to be offered in 2026 and 2028, while the Intermediate/Advanced course is scheduled to be offered in 2027 and 2029. The other courses rotate over a three-year period. For example, the 3 M.A. courses offered in summer 2026 will be offered again in 2029.

Q: When do I write my M.A. Thesis?

A: After completing all of the coursework over three summers, students write the first draft of their M.A. thesis by January of the following year and submit the completed paper in March.

Q: How many courses am I supposed to take in the second and third year? Also, when will I complete the program and earn my degree?

A: The following schedules represent the courses a student would take if completing the M.A. program in three consecutive years, beginning in the summer of 2026 or the summer of 2027.

Beginning in 2026

- 1st Year (Summer 2026): Elem. JPN Pedagogy + 3 M.A. Courses (9 weeks)
- 2nd Year (Summer 2027): Inter/Adv. JPN Pedagogy + 3 M.A. Courses (9 weeks)
- 3rd Year (Summer 2028): 3 M.A. Courses (6 weeks)
and register for M.A. Thesis Research
- March 2029: Complete the M.A. Thesis
- May 2029: Obtain M.A. Degree

Beginning in 2027

- 1st Year (Summer 2027): 3 M.A. Courses (6 weeks)
- 2nd Year (Summer 2028): Elem. JPN Pedagogy + 3 M.A. Courses (9 weeks)
- 3rd Year (Summer 2029): Inter/Adv. JPN Pedagogy + 3 M.A. Courses (9 weeks)
and register for M.A. Thesis Research
- March 2030: Complete the M.A. Thesis
- May 2030: Obtain M.A. Degree

Q: What are the requirements for applying as a non-degree student?

A: To apply as a non-degree student, you need to submit the following materials. You don't need to send your TOEFL or OPI score.

- Official Transcripts
- Two letters of recommendation
- Handwritten Statement of Purpose in Japanese
- Resume

Q: Do I need to use a specific form for the statement of purpose in Japanese?

A: No, but it must be handwritten on a single sheet of plain paper. Do not use "genkou youshi."

Q: I'm interested in only one of the M.A. courses that will be offered this summer. Is it possible to take only one course?

A: No, students must take all the courses. Unfortunately, we do not have any enrollment option that would allow you to take select courses.

Q: How should I request an application packet?

A: You must apply using the following online application. The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences no longer prints paper applications.

Application Information for GSAS (The Graduate School of Arts and Science, Columbia University)

---> <[Link](#)>

Q: When should I submit application materials to the admissions office? Is there "early admission"?

A: The deadline for the 2026 summer application is February 19, 2026. There is no early admission for the Japanese Pedagogy M.A. Program. You can start the application process online as soon as it becomes available in October, but we suggest that you wait until you receive your TOEFL or OPI test results before starting the process. Applicants for our M.A. program must submit all materials together, including their TOEFL or OPI score and the statement of purpose in Japanese. (Please note that the admissions office will not start reviewing your application until all required materials have been received.) We will not make admissions decisions until after the deadline, February 19th.

Q: Can I get an F-1 student visa if I am accepted into the program?

A: Yes. After you submit the appropriate documentation, the International Students and Scholars Office will issue you a Certificate of Eligibility (I-20 form) to allow you to apply for an F-1 student visa at the US embassy. Keep in mind that the I-20 will only be valid for the year you will be enrolled. The I-20 needs to be re-issued each year that you attend the program. Please note that international students cannot participate as non-degree students because non-degree students do not qualify for I-20 and cannot apply for student F-1 visas.

Q: Is it possible to obtain a one-year OPT visa to work in the United States after completing the MA program?

A: Unfortunately, students are not eligible to apply for OPT after the completion of their program because the program lasts only two months each year and they do not accumulate enough time in F-1 status. According to immigration regulations, only students who have been in full-time student status for at least one full academic year are eligible to apply for OPT.

Q: Where can I get more information about the TOEFL?

A: Please refer to the following TOEFL website. TOEFL Official Website ---> <[Link](#)>

Q: I'm a non-native speaker of Japanese. How should I take the Oral Proficiency Interview?

A: Please refer to the following ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) website for information about the OPI. ACTFL Certified Proficiency Testing Programs ---> <[Link](#)>

Q: What time do the classes start and end?

A: Classes are held Monday through Friday. Here is the schedule.

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| 1 | 8:30-10:00 (90 min) |
| 2 | 10:15-11:45 (90 min) |
| 3 | 1:00-2:00 (60min) |

Q: What kind of housing options are available?

A: On-campus housing is available for our M.A. students, and information will be available on our website soon. If you prefer to live in an apartment, you may do so, but you will have to make your own arrangements.

Q: Is financial aid available?

A: Please refer to the following website for information on financial aid.

Financing Your Education, GSAS ---> <[Link](#)>