Frequently Asked Questions (UPDATED: 11/10/2026)

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. You do not have to worry about your qualifications for the program. However, it is crucial that you explain your motivation for participating in the program, future plans, career goals, etc. in your hand-written statement of purpose, which is required in order to apply to the program.

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

A: Tuition for 2027 will be finalized in March. Typically, tuition increases by 5% each year. In 2026, the tuition was $21,086. In addition, there are other charges, such as Facility and Health Service fees. Unfortunately, there are no scholarships available for this program.

Q: I understand that if I am accepted into the program, I can take only 3 M.A. courses for a total of 6 weeks (NOT 9 weeks) this summer. How much is tuition for 6 weeks?

A: Tuition for the summer of 2027 is the same for both the 6 week and 9 week program. This is due to the fact that during the summer in which a student is in the 6 week program, it is required for them to register for the M.A. Thesis Course, regardless of whether they will be completing their thesis during that term. Students must fulfill the requirements for the M.A. degree in three consecutive summers or within a period of six years**, and every student is required to pay the full tuition amount set for each summer for the three years.

**On rare occasions, students will choose to complete the M.A. over the course of four summers (instead of the usual three summers). In this case, the student may take a 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 the Pedagogy course.

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

A: Those who have completed the Elementary Japanese Pedagogy course before (as either degree or non-degree students) may take the Intermediate/Advanced Pedagogy course. Furthermore, those

with years of experience teaching Japanese at the college level may apply to take the Intermediate/Advanced Pedagogy course as non-degree students for summer 2027. The tuition was $7,150 for the three-week pedagogy course in 2026. Again, it increases by 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 2028 and 2030, while the Intermediate/Advanced course is scheduled to be offered in 2027 and 2029, respectively. The other courses rotate over a three-year period. For example, the 3 M.A. courses offered in summer 2027 will be offered again in 2030.

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

A: After completing all of the course work over three summers, students write the first draft of their M.A. thesis by January 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. in three consecutive years, beginning in the summer of 2027 or the summer of 2028.

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

Beginning in 2028

- 1st Year (Summer 2028): Elem. JPN Pedagogy + 3 M.A. Courses (9 weeks)
- 2nd Year (Summer 2029): Inter/Adv. JPN Pedagogy + 3 M.A. Courses (9 weeks)

- 3rd Year (Summer 2030): 3 M.A. Courses (6 weeks) and register for M.A. Thesis Research
- March 2031: Complete the M.A. Thesis
- May 2031: 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 is no longer printing 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 2027 summer application is February 18, 2027. 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 receiving the result of the TOEFL or OPI test 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 remember 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 18th.

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. Bear in mind that the I-20 will only be valid for the year you will be enrolled. The I-20 needs to be issued each year for which you will be attending the program. 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: 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.

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. The housing information will be available and updated here sometime soon. If you prefer to live in an apartment, you may do so. However, in that case, 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>**