

EAJ405: Advanced Japanese Language Proficiency
FULLY ONLINE COURSE
Fall 2017

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Course Description:

This course will provide a standard approach to advanced language materials with a particular focus on current usage and dynamic vocabulary. Students will work specifically on the reading and listening comprehension skills required in a Japanese university setting. This course is designed for students who have completed EAJ302, or who are currently in EAJ301 and interested in additional, very challenging language work. Unlike most language classes, this course will not cover a small set of vocabulary and grammar, but rather expose you to large sets in a sort of “shotgun” approach. The pedagogical theory behind this approach is that repeated exposure to *real* texts written for *native speakers* will result in stronger language skills.

Required Materials/System Requirements:

- *Good* dictionaries—both a *kanji* dictionary and a Japanese-English dictionary. Your course materials will not be entirely glossed—you will need to use your dictionary *every day*. Really. I’m not kidding. Get used to it.
- If you’re not familiar with the Blackboard Learning System (BLS), take some time at the beginning of the semester to get used to it. There is a log-in link to BLS on MyUAlbany.
- **I strongly suggest that you use Firefox or Chrome when on BLS.** There have been incidents of students losing work—sometimes entire assignments--if they are using Internet Explorer.
- You will need to have software that can read .pptx files (Powerpoint or OpenOffice) installed on your computer.
- Your computer must have a Japanese language pack enabled. Most computers already have that, but if you have any problems let me know.
- For the audio files, you’ll need to have software installed on your computer that can play .mp3 files.

Testing and Grading:

Lessons: Generally speaking, lessons have multiple attempts enabled, are not timed, and can be done in multiple sittings. You may consult any outside texts you like (dictionaries, etc.), and if you want to work with a classmate (NOT a native speaker friend!) to learn from each other, that’s O.K. Do avoid just getting answers from each other without actually learning the material. After each attempt, you’ll be shown your score, and how you answered each question. You then have the option to try again to improve your score. In most cases there is a minimum score (noted in the instructions). If you don’t earn the minimum score, Blackboard will not let you do the next lesson. If you do earn the minimum score, then you’re free to decide if you want to improve on it. Lessons do not have official due dates, but you should do them in the suggested order and at the suggested time. Having no due date means that you can return to the lesson at any point in the semester to review (or revise) it if you like.

Homework: Homework assignments can only be done once. They are not timed, and can be completed in multiple sittings. They have official due dates. You may consult any outside texts you like (dictionaries, etc.), but **do not work together with anyone—your work must be your own!**

Unit Tests: Students will be required to take four unit tests in the course of the semester (approximately one each month). These tests will be incrementally weighted, i.e., the first two will be worth 10% each, and the third and fourth (final) will be worth 15% each. These tests can only be taken once, are timed, and must be completed in one sitting. They are given on a specific date, during a limited time window. Check the calendar on Blackboard to make sure you don't have any conflicts. **You may not consult outside texts while taking the tests, and your work must be your own!**

The way the tests will work is this: I'll make them available through Blackboard for a 12 hour window on the day of. You will be responsible for logging on during that window and taking the test. The test is timed—the system will save and submit your answers when the time is up. **The test is on the honor code: do not use outside materials, and do no collude with anyone on it!** That said, if I discover you have cheated on the test, I will give you a score of 0 and report you to the dean of Undergraduate Studies. The bar to pass this class is set such that you don't need to ace every test; you are all in this class because you want to learn Japanese. Cheating would not help you do that, so I expect academic honesty.

Course grades will be based on the following criteria:

Unit Exams	50%
Homework	30%
Lessons	20%

This course is S/U graded. A final score of 60% or more for all the work described above will equal an S. A final score of 59% or less will equal a U.

This syllabus is a contract. The instructor agrees to grade you on the criteria and in the manner listed above. The instructor considers a grade of "Incomplete" to be for emergencies (death in the family, extreme illness, etc.), not for students who fail to plan ahead. The instructor does not curve grades or give extra credit assignments.

If you want to check on your performance at any point in the semester, you can check your status on BLS. If that spreadsheet seems confusing, feel free to come to the instructor's office and we'll run through the numbers. If there are extenuating circumstances that you anticipate will unduly affect your grade—life happens!—it is your responsibility to speak with the instructor **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**.

This is a fully online class. To some extent, it is self-paced; you can work on the lessons and homework ahead of time if you wish, but the exams must be taken within a certain time window. I have put all the due dates and schedules on the Blackboard "Calendar." **I strongly encourage you to check that regularly to see what's due.** I will not be sending out e-mails to regularly remind you of this. You can set Blackboard to remind you of items due—it might be a good idea to do that, but I'll leave it up to you whether you want to. Also, the "What's Due" feature of Blackboard is not necessarily reliable. It works some of the time, but not all of the time. It is much safer to rely on the calendar.