

# Japanese

Mary Anne O'Neil, *Chair*,  
*Foreign Languages and Literatures*

## Japanese

Hitomi K. Johnson  
 Akira R. Takemoto

Courses in Japanese are designed to develop proficiency in speaking, writing, and reading the language and to acquaint the student with Japanese literature and culture. The courses in Japanese literature in translation (listed in the *World Literature* section) will offer students an introduction to classical and modern Japanese literature. Students can also choose to gain an introduction to traditional Japanese art and aesthetics (Art History 248), and studio art classes in calligraphy and tea ceremony (Studio Art 301), or take a course on traditional and modern Japanese history. In the Fall Semester 2008, a course that focuses on modern Japanese literature and film will be offered.

**Placement in language courses:** Students with previous Japanese language experience must complete a placement test with Professor Takemoto before enrolling in Japanese 205 or 305.

**The Foreign Languages and Literatures/ Japanese minor:** The minor in Japanese will consist of Japanese 205 and 206 (or the equivalent of two years of college-level Japanese) plus a minimum of 12 credits in Japanese language, literature, history, or art from courses higher than 200. Courses on Japan offered under Asian studies, world literature, art history, studio art, and history may be used to satisfy the requirements for this minor.

*Note:* Courses taken P-D-F prior to the declaration of a language major or minor will satisfy course and credit requirements for the major or minor. Courses taken P-D-F may not be used to satisfy course and credit requirements for the major or minor after the major or minor has been declared.

**105, 106 Elementary Japanese**  
**4, 4** Takemoto

The grammatical basis for reading modern Japanese literature and for conducting conversations on general topics. Five periods per week.

**205, 206 Intermediate Japanese**  
**4, 4** Takemoto

This course continues to introduce new grammar patterns and *kanji*, while providing the student with the opportunity to practice conversational skills and to read cultural and literary materials. Five periods per week. *Prerequisites:* Japanese 106 or consent of instructor.

**305, 306 Third Year Japanese**  
**4, 4** Johnson

A comprehensive grammar review plus continued instruction and practice in Japanese conversation, grammar, and composition. Focus on development of strong reading and translation skills in order to explore ways to recognize and communicate intercultural differences. Students must know how to use a *kanji* dictionary. *Prerequisites:* Japanese 206 or consent of instructor. Students who have not taken Japanese at Whitman previously are required to take an oral and written placement examination for entrance.

**391, 392 Independent Study**  
**1-4, 1-4** Staff

This course is designed for students who have completed two years of college-level Japanese and who desire to pursue further studies in Japanese language, literature, or religion. The instructor will select readings in Japanese on topics in which the student shows interest. Training in the use of a *kanji* (character) dictionary will be an important component of the course. Students taking the class for three or more credits will be required to prepare translations of selected readings with a critical introductory essay. *Prerequisites:* Japanese 206 and consent of instructor.

The program in Japanese also includes courses in world literature. These classes are listed below and in the *World Literature* section of the catalog.

**WLIT 327 Masterworks of Classical Japanese Literature**  
**4; not offered 2008-09**

Japanese prose and poetry from the eighth through the 19th centuries. Works include *The Manyoshu*, Japan's earliest poetic anthology; *The Tale of Genji*, the first novel in the world to be written by a woman; *The Tale of the Heike*, describing the rise of the samurai ethic; the poems of Saigyō and Ryōkan; and the *haiku* of Bashō and Buson.

**WLIT 328 Modern Japanese Literature**  
**4, x** Takemoto

Selected novels, short stories, film scripts, and poems representative of styles and themes which characterize 20th century Japanese literature. Film scripts discussed in conjunction with a viewing of the films themselves.

**WLIT 387 Special Studies: The Poet Monk in Japanese Literature**

**4; not offered 2008-09**

The focus of this course will be to explore the nexus between Mahayana Buddhist ideas and classical Japanese literature. We will attempt to discover how monks and poets used the vocabulary of Japanese Buddhism not only to create works of fiction and poetry, but also to articulate and develop a vocabulary of Japanese literary aesthetics. In particular, we will read poems and short narratives by Buddhist recluses, including Saigyō, Ippen, Ikkyū, Bashō, and Ryōkan. Students will be asked to write short papers, give oral presentations, submit a longer term paper, and participate in a final oral examination. All readings will be in English, but a background in Japanese language would be extremely helpful. Not open to first-year students. Distribution area: humanities or alternative voices.