

KCJS37(2026) Spring Semester Second-Year Japanese (Maeguchi/Nakata Class) Syllabus

Course Information

- Course Title: Second-Year Japanese
- Primary Instructor: Orie Maeguchi 前口 織江 (oy18@columbia.edu)
- Co-Instructor: Kaori Nakata 中田 かおり (kn2345@columbia.edu)
- Office: Fusokan(扶桑館) 203 Tel: 075-251-4996
- Office Hours: Mon–Fri, 13:00–15:00
- Class Time: Mon–Fri, 9:00–11:10 (two 60-minute sessions with a 10-minute break)

Objective of KCJS's Japanese Program

The objective of KCJS's Japanese Program is to enhance the student's communicative competence and to enable interactions in Japanese. In particular, a KCJS student will come to:

1. Understand the intentions of others when Japanese is spoken;
2. Understand the intentions of others when written materials of various genres and media are presented;
3. Control the use of Japanese expressions, both spoken and written, in order to fit the socio-cultural settings and purposes of communication;
4. Expand the modes of communication used to include such genres as formal presentations, negotiations, projects, the organization of events, and their follow-up.

Course Description

This course is designed for students who have completed at least one year of college-level Japanese or the equivalent. Students who want to take this course are expected to be at the **Novice-High level** of [the ACTFL \(American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages\) Proficiency Guidelines](#) at the beginning of the course. Please note that the language levels used at KCJS (i.e. 2nd-year, 3rd-year, etc.) may not exactly match those used at your home institution. The placement test, however, will help ensure that you are enrolled in a class that will improve your skills most effectively.

Course Objectives/Goals

The goal of this course is to achieve **Intermediate-Low** or above of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. Upon successful completion of the course, the students will:

- Understand and use common expressions to describe people, things, and experiences in everyday life.
- Handle simple conversations involving help, suggestions, obligations, and hypothetical situations.
- Express plans, intentions, and feelings with some detail, whether spoken or written.
- Interact appropriately in formal settings using basic keigo.
- Understand short informative texts and narratives, including cultural stories.

Course Materials

- *TOBIRA* II Beginning Japanese
- *TOBIRA* II Beginning Japanese Workbook 2 (Vocabulary/Grammar/Listening)

These books are available at the Ryoshinkan Bookstore. You can get a 10% discount by showing your Co-op card. Additional materials will be provided by the instructors.

We use laptops every day in class, so please bring yours everyday.

Course Policy

General Guidelines

1. If you are absent or ill, notify your primary instructor promptly by email, and be sure to CC the language program coordinator, Nishimata-sensei (西俣先生) at mf2249@columbia.edu.
2. Students requiring accommodations should consult with Nishimata-sensei at the start of the semester.
3. Eating is not allowed during class. Drinks are permitted.
4. Use polite speech (です／ます) when speaking with instructors and staff.
5. Emails sent after 5:00 p.m. Monday–Thursday will be answered the next morning. Emails sent after 5:00 p.m. Friday or on weekends will be answered on Monday.
6. Students are responsible for keeping track of time and assignment deadlines.
7. Do not attend class with a fever of 37.5°C or higher, even if you have tested negative for COVID-19.

Attendance and Participation

1. Daily attendance is required. No make-up classes will be provided.
2. One point will be deducted from the participation score for every 5 minutes of absence. Arriving 1–4 minutes late will be treated as 5 minutes. Being more than 20 minutes late will count as one full absence.
3. Your six lowest participation scores (for any reason) will be dropped at the end of the semester. Use these for illness or emergencies. Additional absences will receive a score of zero.
4. For serious circumstances (e.g., bereavement), submit a written explanation to the Director and your instructor within five business days of your return.

GRADING CRITERIA (Attendance, Preparation & Participation)

- 10 : Preparation for assigned materials is thoroughly done including looking up vocabulary and kanji.
The student is able to actively participate in class activities, and their performance is smooth.
In student's preparation, unclear areas are identified clearly.
The content of the material is understood accurately.
Performance clearly reflects the feedback instructors have given previously.
- 8 : Participation is active, but preparation has not been thoroughly performed including looking up vocabulary and kanji.
In the student's preparation, unclear areas are not identified clearly.
The content of the assigned material is not understood thoroughly or accurately.
Performance is not smooth in order to communicate without difficulty.
Mistakes are repeatedly made in the same areas where instructors have given feedback previously.

- 6 : Lack of thorough preparation hinders active participation in class activities.
 In the student's preparation, unclear areas are not identified clearly.
 Half of the vocabulary and kanji are not looked up.
 The content of the assigned material is only partial or greatly misunderstood.
- 5 : Preparation has not been performed, and nor is there participation in class activities.
 In the student's preparation, unclear areas are not identified clearly.
 Most of the vocabulary and kanji are not looked up.
 The content of the assigned material is not understood.
- 0 : Absent

Quizzes and Tests

1. No make-up quizzes will be given. The two lowest quiz scores will be dropped.
2. Make-up lesson tests may be arranged with advance approval and a valid excuse.
 These will be graded at 80% of the actual score.
3. The Participation Agreement you signed stipulates the following:
 "I understand that attendance in class and any required activities are mandatory and I will not plan any personal travel that might interfere with the academic program."
 Therefore, makeup tests will not be scheduled especially for you before or after your travel, nor can you ask for the schedule to be changed for the test.
 You are expected to take full responsibility for the consequences of your absence for personal travel.

Homework

1. Submit assignments on time—by the beginning of class unless otherwise noted. Work submitted after 9:00 a.m. will be considered one day late and will be penalized 10%.
2. All submitted work must be your own. Violations will be addressed under [Columbia University's Honor Code](#).

Columbia University Statement on Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity

As members of an academic community, each one of us bears the responsibility to participate in scholarly discourse and research in a manner characterized by intellectual honesty and scholarly integrity. Collaborative scholarship requires the study of other scholars' work, the free discussion of such work, and the explicit acknowledgement of those ideas in any work that informs our own. This exchange of ideas relies upon a mutual trust that sources, opinions, facts, and insights will be properly noted and carefully credited. In practical terms, this means that, as students, all work submitted in this course, whether in draft or final form, must be your own. You must be responsible for the full citations of others' ideas in all of your research papers and projects; you must be scrupulously honest when taking your examinations; you must always submit your own work and not that of another student, scholar, or internet agent. Any breach of this intellectual responsibility is a breach of faith with the rest of our academic community. It undermines our shared intellectual culture, and it cannot be tolerated.

Use of Generative AI

Absent a clear statement from a course instructor granting permission, the use of Generative AI tools to complete an assignment or exam is prohibited. The unauthorized use of AI shall be treated similarly to unauthorized assistance and/or plagiarism (page 11 of Standards and Discipline at <https://universitypolicies.columbia.edu/content/standards-and-discipline>).

Policy

KCJS expects all KCJS community members to follow these guidelines when using Generative AI tools for teaching and learning, research, and work-related functions.

- Do not input Confidential Information;
- Do not input Personal Information;
- Do not input information that violates IP or general contract terms and conditions;
- Confirm the accuracy of the output provided by Generative AI tools;
- Check the output of Generative AI tools for bias;
- Disclose the use of Generative AI tools;
- Comply with third-party intellectual property rights.

For more detailed information, please refer to the following page.

<https://provost.columbia.edu/content/office-senior-vice-provost/ai-policy>

Grading

Participation: 25% Homework: 30% Vocab.Tests / Kanji Tests: 20% Lesson Tests: 20% CIP: 5%

Letter grades are assigned as follows:

A: 100–94	A–: 93.9–90	B+: 89.9–87	B: 86.9–83	B–: 82.9–80
C+: 79.9–77	C: 76.9–73	C–: 72.9–70	D: 69.9–60	F: Below 60

Grades will be updated regularly in the online gradebook. Check it often to monitor your progress.

If you find any discrepancies, contact your instructor immediately.

Note: Final grades are not rounded. You must fall within the listed numeric range to receive the corresponding letter grade.

We're Here to Support You

Learning in a new language and environment can feel challenging at times.

If you ever feel unsure or concerned about something, please reach out.

The KCJS faculty and staff are here to support you—academically and personally.

Beyond the Syllabus: A Message from Me to You

Let's Learn Together!

1. Getting better at a language starts with giving things a try—even when you're not sure you'll get it right. Mistakes are not something to avoid; they are how we grow.
2. Don't worry if others seem ahead of you. Everyone comes with different backgrounds and experiences, so it's natural that people know and can do different things.
3. If you don't understand something, ask your classmates first before looking it up on your phone or laptop. How you get the answer matters: the way you arrive at the correct answer affects how strongly you remember it.
4. When you notice someone having a harder time, helping them out will also deepen your own learning. Learning together makes everyone stronger.
5. Still confused? Ask the teacher—teachers love getting questions.
If your question isn't directly related to the current activity or might take some time to explain, it's usually better to ask during break time or office hours.

Using Japanese in Class

6. Japanese isn't only for grammar and vocabulary exercises. It's for everything we say in class. Try using simple phrases like:
「じゃ、私から。(I'll go first.)」 or 「えっと、次は...。(What should we do next?)」
These small, everyday expressions make a big difference.
7. Finished your task? Don't go silent. Chat with your groupmates in Japanese.
Being able to talk naturally like this will really help when speaking with native speakers.
8. One thing to keep in mind:
If someone is working hard to stay in Japanese and you suddenly switch to English, it can feel discouraging—like lighting a cigarette next to someone who's trying to quit.
Let's be mindful of each other and encourage one another.

Getting Ready for Class

9. Try to arrive at least five minutes early.
Greeting your classmates in Japanese helps switch your brain into “Japanese mode.”
10. Before class begins, connect to campus Wi-Fi and open what you'll need—your textbook, Quizlet, or other materials—so you're ready to start right away.
11. If you're late, give a small bow and say to the teacher, 「おくれてすみません。」 before taking your seat. It's a simple way to show respect.
12. Going to the restroom during class is allowed, but if possible, it's best to go beforehand so you can stay focused throughout the lesson.

Take Charge of Your Learning

13. Class time alone is not enough to make real progress. Just like learning the piano, improvement in Japanese comes from what you do outside of class.

14. To keep studying consistently, don't rely on motivation alone.

What really helps is creating an environment where studying is easy—for example, setting a specific time for each assignment and keeping your materials ready so you can start right away.

15. You are in charge of how you pace your homework.

Your schedule will vary depending on other classes and CIP activities, so plan accordingly.

You don't have to wait until the due date—do what you can when you have time.

16. Here's another way to think about it.

Language learning is like nutrition: focusing on only one “nutrient,” or trying to take everything at once, is not very effective.

The same applies to homework.

Instead of spending too much time on one task and skipping others, set a 30-minute time limit for each assignment. If you don't finish, move on and come back later. At first, 30 minutes may not feel like enough. But over time, you'll build speed and balance.

17. And remember: when you are exhausted or not feeling well, resting is also part of learning.

What matters is managing your energy so you can keep going in the long run.

18. Believe that you can speak Japanese, and you may surprise yourself.

Try acting like someone who can speak Japanese—you might just become one.

Focus on the Right Goal

19. “I've studied this before” is not the same as “I can use it.”

Many students assume that moving to a higher-level class and learning new material is the fastest way to improve—even if their foundation is shaky.

Past student data shows the opposite: students who build a solid foundation tend to grow much more.

20. Language progress does not move in a smooth, straight line.

It's more like climbing stairs—sometimes even a spiral staircase.

There will be times when you don't feel like you're improving, or when your hard work doesn't show results right away. That's completely normal.

21. Don't aim for perfection.

When listening or reading, your first goal should be to grasp the main idea. Understanding the big picture—even if you miss some details—is more than enough for real communication.

That's what native speakers do, too.

22. Grades are only one kind of feedback.

Real growth shows up when you actually use your Japanese—for example, when you talk with Japanese students. Pay attention to those moments. That's where your true progress lives.