



Japan Center for Michigan Universities (JCMU)

Syllabus

Course Title:	Elective Course: Business Japanese for Pre-Professionals
Credits:	3
Language of Instruction:	Japanese
Course Instructor:	Naomi Otsuji Email otsuji@jcmu.net Office Hours By appointment
Course meeting time:	Tuesdays 10:50-12:20 and 13:30-15:00

Course Description

This course explores Japanese corporate culture and workplace communication while helping students develop the language skills, social awareness, professional etiquette, and interpersonal strategies expected in Japanese work environments. Students will learn how to communicate appropriately and build positive working relationships in professional settings. Rather than treating these skills as something necessary only for non-native speakers or foreigners working in Japan, the course also examines workplace expectations and communication skills that are equally important for Japanese students and young professionals. Through practical activities such as email writing, meetings, presentations, and job interview simulations, students will deepen their understanding of both Japanese business communication and cross-cultural workplace interaction.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- understand key aspects of Japanese corporate culture, including workplace expectations, communication styles, and professional norms.
- use appropriate Japanese expressions in common workplace situations such as emails, meetings, presentations, and interviews.
- apply strategies for building and maintaining effective professional relationships in Japanese workplace settings.
- recognize and analyze cultural differences in workplace communication between Japan and other contexts.
- engage in practical, task-based activities simulating real workplace communication in Japanese.
- reflect on how workplace communication skills apply not only to non-native speakers, but also to Japanese students entering professional environments.

Textbooks & Other Materials

At this stage, the course is planned to use worksheets and in-class handouts as the primary learning materials rather than a textbook, though this may be revised if necessary.

Requirements

Attendance

Attendance requirements are outlined in *the JCMU Academic Policy*.

AI Use Policy

The use of AI is not prohibited in this course, as the ability to use AI effectively will be an important skill in the future. However, AI is not intended to complete assignments on behalf of students. Instead, it may be used as a supportive tool to assist learning and deepen understanding. For example, if a student uses AI to translate their ideas from English into Japanese, they are expected to reflect on why certain vocabulary and expressions were chosen, and to ask questions to better understand the output. On the other hand, allowing AI to fully complete assignments would result in a loss of valuable learning opportunities. So AI output should not represent a significant amount of submitted works. This course requires that AI be used responsibly and in accordance with the stated guidelines, without replacing the student's own work.

Grading and Attendance

• Attendance and Participation	20%
• Homework/Assignments	20%
• Midterm Presentation	30%
• Final Project & Presentation	30%
TOTAL	100%

Grading Scale

The conversion between the 4.0 grading scale, letter grades, and point system for assignments / participation is as follows:

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F
4.0	3.5		3.0	2.5		2.0	1.5		1.0	0
90-100	87-89	84-86	80-83	77-79	74-76	70-73	67-69	64-66	60-63	59 ↓

Outline of Course Content

The schedule is tentative; further information will be explained during class. Each class consists of a 90-minute lecture session and a 90-minute discussion, case study, or role-play activity.

Week 1	Sep. 8	Course Introduction & Becoming a Professional <i>From Student to Professional</i> Introduction to workplace expectations and professional mindset.
Week 2	Sep. 15	Professional Communication and Workplace Attitudes <i>Communicating Professionally</i> Developing effective workplace communication skills and attitudes.
Week 3	Sep. 22	*National Holiday -- No Class
Week 4	Sep. 29	Workplace Relationships and Professionalism <i>Building Workplace Relationships</i> Understanding professional relationships and workplace culture.
Week 5	Oct. 6	First Impressions in Business <i>Making a Strong First Impression</i> Preparing for professional interactions in Japanese workplaces.
Week 6	Oct. 13	Professional Behavior and Office Etiquette <i>Acting Professionally at Work</i> Learning expected workplace behavior and office practices.
Week 7	Oct. 20	Business Card Exchange <i>Introducing Yourself as a Professional</i> Understanding professional introductions and networking customs.
Week 8	Oct. 27	Receiving Visitors and Hospitality <i>Representing Your Organization</i> Developing skills for interacting with clients and visitors.
Week 9	Nov. 3	*Culture Day -- No Class
Week 10	Nov. 10	Meetings and Presentations <i>Participating and Contributing</i> Developing skills for meetings and presentations.
Week 11	Nov. 17	Intercultural Communication in the Workplace <i>Working Across Cultures</i> Exploring communication and cultural differences in the workplace.
Week 12	Nov. 24	Business Dining and Social Etiquette <i>Building Professional Networks</i> Understanding social interactions in professional settings.

Week 13	Dec. 1	Integrated Workplace Simulation I <i>Applying Workplace Skills</i> Integrating communication and professional skills in workplace scenarios.
Week 14	Dec. 8	Integrated Workplace Simulation II <i>Demonstrating Workplace Readiness</i> Final workplace simulation and performance assessment.
Week 15	Dec. 15	Course Reflection and Future Career Development <i>Preparing for Your Career</i> Reflecting on learning and planning for future professional growth. *On the final day, there is no scheduled morning class, and only the afternoon session will be conducted.