

Winter School 2026 (January. 2026)

Studying Osaka, the Mercantile Capital of Japan

Language: English

Course Description:

Join an enriching journey through Osaka, a vibrant city pulsating with the spirit of entrepreneurship and cultural dynamism. Our program offers a comprehensive exploration of Osaka's unique identity through captivating lectures and immersive experiences.

Introduction to Osaka: Delve into the captivating history of Osaka, tracing its evolution from a thriving business hub to a cultural melting pot. Explore the city's dynamic business center, burgeoning suburban areas, and rich entertainment culture.

Entrepreneurship (Basic): Uncover the secrets of Japan's corporate giants as we spotlight the visionary founders behind some of the nation's most renowned companies. Learn from their innovative ideas and pioneering practices that have shaped the landscape of Japanese business.

Entrepreneurship (Advanced): *This course offers a close look at the Kansai startup ecosystem. Explore real examples of an incubation model and international entrepreneurship centered around Phoenixi, a Kyoto-based residential incubator. The importance of business planning – not as a formality, but as a process of refining purpose and direction – will also be discussed.*

Japanese Business Culture: Immerse yourself in the intricacies of Japanese business culture through engaging discussions and analysis. Explore the nuances of corporate etiquette, negotiation strategies, and relationship-building customs that underpin Japan's business world.

Course Objectives:

1. Gain a comprehensive understanding of Osaka's economic development and its distinct business culture, setting it apart from other metropolitan areas.
2. Develop a discerning eye for cultural nuances and corporate practices through firsthand experiences and in-depth discussions.

3. Experience the vibrant entertainment scene of Osaka firsthand, gaining insight into its significance in local culture.
4. Cultivate an appreciation for the philosophies and strategies driving successful entrepreneurship in Japan.

Course Content:

Our dynamic program combines mini-lectures, interactive workshops, and stimulating group discussions to deepen your understanding of Osaka's dynamic landscape. Field trips and guest lectures complement classroom learning, offering real-world insights into the course content.

Assignments

1. **Excursion Insights:** *Share your thoughts and comments on the excursion sites, exhibits, or ideas that you find significant during our explorations.*
2. **Guest Speaker Feedback:** *Share your thoughts and comments on the guest speaker's talk*
3. **Entrepreneurial Ideas:** *Propose original entrepreneurial ideas based on your learnings from the program. This assignment will play a crucial role in your final presentation.*

Additional Information:

We encourage self-study on course-related themes based on your individual interests.

The submission requirements for assignments 1-3 will be provided in class.

Please note that assignment content is subject to change based on program updates.

Grading Policies

The course will be assessed by formative and summative assessment. Formative assessment will be undertaken throughout the course and consist of short practical exercises and group discussions.

Textbooks

There are no "set" textbooks required for the course.

References

Students will be provided with readings and activity materials

throughout the course from a range of relevant resources.

Feedback Method

Formative and summative feedback will be provided throughout the course.

Course Themes and Topics

Introduction to Osaka

1. Suita & Modern City Planning
2. Osaka: Culture & Entertainment

Entrepreneurs (Basic)

1. Panasonic (1)
2. Panasonic (2)
3. Nissin Foods (1)
4. Nissin Foods (2)

Entrepreneurship (Advanced)

1. A field-based introduction to Phoenixi, a Kyoto-based residential incubator for entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs
2. Real case studies of foreign entrepreneurs building ventures in Japan

Japanese Business Cultures

1. Social and Cultural Transformation Challenges - Part One
2. Social and Cultural Transformation Challenges - Part Two
3. Corporate and Company Culture: Impacts, Importance, and Evolution.
4. Case Study 1: Topic (TBD), Discussion, and Q&A

Excursion (Spots are subject to change.)

- Osaka Museum of Housing and Living
- Entrepreneurial Museum of Challenge and Innovation
- Cup Noodles Museum Osaka Ikeda

Syllabus (Survival Japanese Language with Cultural Experience)

1	Subject	Survival Japanese Language with Cultural Experience
2	Language	Japanese
3	Key words	Zero beginner, Grammar, Communication, Conversation
4	Lecturer	TBA
5	Lecture style	In-person
6	Evaluation Criteria	Excellent(S) 90-100%; Very good(A) 80-89%; Good(B) 70-79%; Pass(C) 60-69%; Fail(D) 0-59%
7	Evaluation methods	Attendance and Participation 60%, Assignments 20%, Review Quizzes 20%
8	Prerequisites	● Students who have had less than 300 hours of Japanese classes. ● This course is aimed for complete beginners with no previous knowledge of the Japanese language. ● Restrictions may apply to intermediate level students or above due to class size limitations (Priority will be given to beginners).
9	Course Description	This course is an introductory Japanese language course for students who have never learned Japanese before, or have a very basic knowledge of Japanese greetings, such as hiragana and katakana. Students are taught fundamental expressions and phrases necessary to “survive” during a short stay in Japan. Additionally, they can experience Japanese culture through food sample making, which originates in Osaka. (Contents are subject to change.) By the end of the course, students will be able to use basic Japanese conversation expressions and phrases in daily life and understand a part of Japanese traditional culture.
10	Course Objectives	The aim of this course is to provide international students who are beginner with useful Japanese phrases and vocabulary necessary to deal with their situations in daily communication, and to have them learn a part of Japanese culture. Students who successfully complete this course will be able to learn the following: • Useful expressions: greetings, self-introduction, etc. • Basic words and phrases: indicating time, prices, etc. • Basic conversation in daily life: shopping, having a meal, etc.
11	Course Schedule	[Session 1: Self introduction] Goal: You can tell others your name, country, and jobs, and ask others about theirs. Items: Expressions for greetings, Noun sentences [Session 2: Japanese Cultural Studies1] Goal: You can understand a part of Japanese Culture. Items: Introduction to Japanese culture and Talking with Japanese students [Session 3: Shopping] Goal: You can ask the location and the price of things you want to buy. Items: 'N des ka?', 'arimaska?', Number (up to 10,000), Counting money etc. [Session 4: Restaurant] Goal: You can order food in a restaurant. Items: vocabulary about Food, “N no N”, “kore/sore/are”, etc. [Session 5: Daily Life] Goal: You can talk and ask about daily life. Items: Verb sentences, Day of the week, Time word (days) etc. [Session 6: My Country/Hometown] Goal: You can describe your country/hometown to others, can ask others about theirs. Items: Adjective sentences, “Donna~tokoro desuka?” etc. [Session 7: Japanese Cultural Studies2] Goal: You can understand a part of Japanese Culture. Items: Japanese archery or Japanese Tea ceremony experience. * The schedule is subject to change.
12	Assignments	Students are required to complete a worksheet provided every day (1-2 pages). Students must expect to spend about one hour every day for reviewing the day's lesson.
13	Text books	Students will be provided with learning materials and original handouts throughout the course from the lecturer.
14	References	Students will be provided with details of a range of internet-based resources.
15	Notes on Taking the Course	/