

LJ 320: Conversational Japanese

Boston University Fall 2023

Instructor:

Name

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E-mail

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Office Hours

M 1:30 - 3:30pm
W 9:00-10:00pm
or by appointment

Office

718 Commonwealth Ave Room 501C
617-358-5854

Course Schedule:

Section **A1** MWF 12:20am-1:10am CAS 325

Course Materials:

<Required> Shimada : *Dekiru Nihongo Intermediate* できる日本語 中級 (ALC Press)

* Audio file is available on Geddes Language Center (www.bu.edu/geddes)

Course Description:

This course is designed for students who have successfully completed LJ 211 or have an equivalent or higher proficiency level in Japanese. The primary goal is to assist students to further develop oral and aural Japanese communication skills, by practicing the types of conversation that occur in daily situations as well as being aware of pragmatics and cultural aspect accompanying those situations. Students will also increase their knowledge of Japan and its society, its customs, the ways of thinking of Japanese, taking into consideration individual speaker's various backgrounds while practicing the conversations.

Course Objectives:

Upon satisfactorily completing all assignments (and, where applicable, revisions) in a timely fashion and participating actively in-class, a student will be able to perform tasks such as:

- 1) Use formal and casual language more properly and comfortably
- 2) Handle various situations that you will most likely encounter, such as inquiries, requests, complaints, and negotiate when there is an issue to resolve
- 3) Explain problems, symptoms, concepts and give instructions appropriately
- 4) Handle 'tricky' situations, such as making apologies and declining invitations tactfully
- 5) Acquire idiomatic expressions
- 6) Gain a deeper understanding of Japanese language and interpersonal perceptions in relation to culture and society, especially paying attention to factors such as gender and generation
- 7) State opinions constructively and respectfully
- 8) Craft and deliver well-structured presentations and informal speaking opportunities in Japanese

This course also fulfills 1 unit of the HUB area below:

- Oral and/or Signed Communication
through in-class activities, oral test, projects, and presentation
- Teamwork/Collaboration
through group tasks, such as skit and debate
- Global Citizenship and International Literacy
through identifying yourself in interlinked world

In order to achieve these goals this course is designed to build and increase a broad range of vocabulary and expressions, as well as deepen familiarity with casual and formal Japanese speech.

Language Placement Policy:

Students who have acquired knowledge of Japanese by means other than coursework (i.e. family background, travel or study in a foreign country, participation in non-credit summer language programs, etc.) and those who have previously studied Japanese outside Boston University must consult with your instructor immediately and take the placement test before being officially admitted. Duplication of credit for courses taken at the college level is not allowed. Likewise, if it becomes apparent that a student is not placed to his/her appropriate level, s/he will be asked to move to another level.

The last day to drop the class (without a “W” grade) is October 10th. The last day to withdraw from the class (with a “W” grade) is November 13th.

Evaluation & Grading Scale:

Course grade consists of

Assignment	16%	
Check-in	16%*	* Contract Grading (hybrid)
Quiz	16%	
(Vocabulary 8%, Grammar 8%)		
Oral Test (3)	15%**	** Self-evaluation (hybrid)
Project	16%	
(Team 10%, Individual 6%)		
Group Presentation	5%**	
Language beyond the Classroom (2)	4%	
Final Oral Exam	12%	

A	100-93%
A-	92.9-90%
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	59.9-0%

100%

[Contract Grading and Self-evaluation system]

Being able to converse in a foreign language can empower you. However, it is common one feels defeated during the learning process, especially when it comes to speaking and listening. Contract grading and self-evaluation will allow the instructor to value your labor and learning process. They focus on your achievement within the course instead of the work just to receive an A. These systems are less subjective and provide supportive environment and promote a true learning structure. They also promote the skills of reflective practice and increase your motivation!

*Check-in (Hybrid Contract Grading)

This course covers 9 lessons with 9 check-in periods (see the course schedule for the dates). During each check-in, you will chat with your instructor regarding the content of the lesson for 10 min. It is considered as satisfactory if 4 check-ins are completed during the semester fulfilling basic labor-emphasis contract and you will get the default grade of B. However, through laboring more via completing additional check-ins, fulfilling advanced labor-emphasis contract, or mastering the specific/individualized skills discussed with your instructor (i.e. going above and beyond the basic expectations), a grade of A can be achieved. The detailed contract information is on the last page of this syllabus.

*Oral Test and Group Presentation (Hybrid Self-evaluation)

This course does not have a traditional written exam. Instead, oral tests will be conducted to assess your achievement. You will have a conversation with your classmate (and/or your instructor) on a given topic. You will also have a group presentation at the end of the semester to display your growth as a conversationalist in Japanese! The assessment of oral test and group presentation consists of the evaluation of your own performance and instructor’s evaluation of your performance. The detailed self-evaluation sheet will be distributed later in class.

Pass/Fail Option:

This course is eligible for the pass/fail policy, which can be reviewed at: <https://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/policy-on-passfail-courses-for-undergraduate-students>.

Religious Observance:

This course follows BU’s policy on religious observance, available at: <http://www.bu.edu/ctl/university-policies/policy-on-religious-observance>.

In-Class Performance and Expectations:

This course does not count your attendance because it is unequivocally essential to participate in each class and practice speaking. Also, this is a course for students who should be able to handle basic Japanese conversation, the instructor expects you to speak in Japanese all the time during the class unless otherwise told by the instructor.

The class will practice conversation in a variety of formal and informal situations. You must pay attention to structural rules of conversations (e.g. how conversations start, continue, and end when requesting, declining, etc.) and will practice producing well-structured argument through projects and presentation. Do not be afraid to make mistakes. In fact, you are encouraged to make mistakes. You learn from your mistakes! You are expected to speak up, but also to be courteous, and be respectful of the

positions of others. Be open-minded. A sense of humor is required, almost.

Since attendance is not counted, under ordinary circumstances, absences will not lower your final grade. If you have a special obligation that will require you to miss classes (e.g., religious observances, family obligations), please talk with the instructor at the beginning of the semester. If there are extraordinary circumstances that cause you to miss more than three classes, contact the instructor to discuss the situation. If you become ill at any point during the semester and are not able to attend the class, make arrangements with the instructor or your classmate(s) to catch up with the missed work. Every student is expected to participate actively in class discussions. This means that you not only participate in class when called upon but volunteer to speak, help others to speak, come to class prepared, and participate actively in small group activities. Disruptive and discourteous behaviors may lower your final grade. Please remember that your classmates rely on your contributions in class to make their own learning experience successful.

Assignments:

Late assignments will be accepted only when they are submitted by the next day after each deadline (not next class meeting), and it will be graded down by 20%. Additional assignments may be announced in class or by email. It is your responsibility to check your BU email account every day. You are also required to read any assigned materials before coming to class.

Quizzes:

There are vocabulary quiz and grammar quiz for each lesson. All quizzes and tests will be given in person at the beginning of each class. Vocabulary is listed on your textbook, but you can find more comprehensive list on Blackboard. The focus of this course is conversation, therefore, no kanji quiz will be conducted. However, this doesn't lighten your workload. It simply means more words to memorize. Small grammar quiz will be given once new patterns are introduced in each lesson. The two lowest-scored vocabulary quizzes and grammar quizzes will be automatically dropped for each student. Therefore, no make-up will be offered for quizzes.

Group Project:

You will receive explicit instruction in teamwork/collaboration for group project. A discussion about the dynamics of well-functioning teamwork will follow. Collaborative learning helps you to learn at a deeper level, retain information longer, and acquire greater communication skills. The details will be discussed later in class.

Individual Project:

This will be a project you can express your creativity, identity, curiosity, tenacity and more. You will work on the approved topic and format. The details will be discussed later in class.

Language beyond the Classroom (formally known as Culture Pass):

BU is a global campus, Boston is an international city, and the Department of World Languages & Literatures expects students to take advantage of events across our campus and beyond. In this course, students are expected to attend either Coffee Hour or Japanese Social events hosted by the Japanese Program. You must attend twice throughout the semester (it doesn't matter which). If you can't make it to any of those events, consult with the instructor early in the semester. Contacting toward the end of semester will not give us alternative options and you may lose the credit. After each event, post a short, recorded clip on Blackboard of your experience in Japanese, summarizing things you learned from the event, things that were intriguing, confusing, or puzzling. These postings will be shared with others in class.

Academic Integrity:

Plagiarism is the passing off of another's words or ideas as your own, and it is a serious academic offense (and also defeats the purpose of getting an education). Plagiarism cases will be handled in accordance with the disciplinary procedures described in the College of Arts and Sciences Academic Conduct Code (<https://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/>). Students are expected to know and abide by the university policy described at <https://www.bu.edu/dos/policies/student-responsibilities/>. This site includes helpful examples of what is and isn't plagiarism. Penalties for plagiarism range from failing an assignment or course (first offense) to suspension or expulsion from BU. Also, the instructor may create quizzes and exams that can identify students who access an outside source. Unauthorized downloading, uploading, sharing, and/or duplicating course materials including, but not limited to, assignments, exams, quizzes, slides, videos, and any other material created and/or provided by the instructor without the instructor's express permission is also a violation of Academic Conduct Code. In cases where the instructor suspects the assigned grading rubric is not capturing the actual quality of student work, the instructor reserves the right to give any student an individual oral quiz or examination at any time; if you would like, you may request that a second instructor be present at such an exam.

For Gender Expressions/Names:

This course aims to support students of all gender expressions and identities. While class rosters provide instructors with students' legal names, please let the instructor know if you would like to be addressed by a different name than what is listed on the Student Link. Students are also invited to tell the instructor early in the semester which set of pronouns (they/their/theirs, she/her/hers, he/him/his, etc.) you feel best fits your identity. It is also possible to change your name permanently to Blackboard, which is then used for other apps connected to Blackboard (Turnitin, Pronto, etc.). The change will apply to all of your classes. This document shows how to make that change:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/14LnqabpkHI-HEAjtN4RTd37_1AN1-SVc/view

Major & Minor in Japanese:

Both Japanese major and minor are offered at Boston University. For further information regarding the major or minor, contact Prof. Sarah Frederick, the convener of Japanese, at sfred@bu.edu. You may also obtain information about the Japanese major and minor by visiting <http://www.bu.edu/wll/academics/degree-programs/japanese/>.

Study Abroad:

BU offers 2 exchange programs, one in Kyoto ([Kyoto Consortium for Japanese Studies](#)) and the other in Tokyo ([Keio University](#)). For further information, please visit the Study Abroad office website at <http://bu.edu/abroad/>.

Resources to Help You with Japanese... and Life Fall 2023

Academic

WLL Writing Consultants: WLL has two excellent student writing consultants, Emily Yoder '24 and Gisele Sanchez '25. Details at <https://www.bu.edu/wll/wll-writing-tutors/>. You can drop in during their weekly meeting hours, or book a session at <https://buwriting.mywconline.com/>.

Geddes Language Center: Geddes has a huge collection of foreign language films, educational software, and other useful multimedia material, as well as a helpful and knowledgeable staff. 685 Commonwealth Avenue, Room 540 (Tsai Center elevator). <http://www.bu.edu/geddes/>, 617-353-2640

BU Libraries: A wealth of online and print resources but also... good advice. Research librarians will introduce you to the library resources relevant to your coursework and help you research a paper. Appointments at <http://www.bu.edu/common/request-an-appointment/>. Mugar Memorial Library, 771 Commonwealth Avenue. 617-353-2700, <http://www.bu.edu/library>

- *Japanese literature & language Resources website:* <https://library.bu.edu/japanese>
- *Tadoku 多読 website:* <http://library.bu.edu/japanese/tadoku> What is tadoku? 'Ta' means 'a lot', and 'doku' means 'to read'. But no. You don't read a lot of difficult books. You start reading a lot of extremely easy books that you can really enjoy. Just like graded readers, you can find books that you can read and enjoy! Download books and read for fun! [_](#)

Educational Resource Center: They won't do your homework for you, but they do offer tutoring for all undergraduate students in a range of subjects, including writing as well as support for general study skills. They do not currently offer specific tutoring for language study. 100 Bay State Rd, 5th floor, 617-353-7077, <http://www.bu.edu/erc>

CELOP Conversation Partners: BU's Center for English Language and Orientation Programs (CELOP) may be able to pair you with a student from a relevant country for language practice. You can meet with your partner frequently or rarely, in person or remotely. More info at www.bu.edu/celop. request a partner at <http://www.bu.edu/celop/support-resources/student-life/conversation-partners/>

CAS Academic Advising: Contact them with any question concerning academic policy and graduation requirements in the College of Arts and Sciences or policies related to a CAS Course. The office is headed by Associate Dean for Student Academic Life Steve Jarvi. 100 Bay State Rd. 4th Floor, casadv@bu.edu or 617-353-2400. <http://www.bu.edu/casadvising>

Disability & Access Services: If you have a disability, do register with this office. This office will give you a letter outlining the accommodations to which you are entitled that you can share with your teachers. Your professor is not allowed to offer you any disability accommodation without an official letter from this office. If you need one, please try to get it in the first two weeks, or as soon as possible. 19 Deerfield Street, 2nd floor, 617-353-3658, <http://www.bu.edu/disability>

Global House: A BU living-learning community located within the Myles Standish dorm at 610 Beacon Street. Global House welcomes students who are passionate about languages and cultures to discover together what it means to build a global perspective. Each language group meets weekly to practice language skills, discuss pop culture and current events in countries where the language is spoken, and collaborate on student-led cultural programming. Members may also choose to enroll in a two-semester HUB cocurricular to earn one HUB unit in either Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy or Individual in Community. Rising sophomores, juniors and seniors who are proficient in a Global House language at the second-semester level (112) or above are eligible to apply. Native speakers and international students are also welcome! Global House languages are Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. Many Global House cultural events are open to all BU students. See www.bu.edu/globalhouse, <http://linktr.ee/globalhousebu>, www.instagram/globalhousebu, and www.facebook.com/globalhousebu.

Resources Beyond the Classroom

University Service Center: A one-stop clearinghouse. Start here if your issue is complex and involves several BU offices or you just don't know where to start (e.g., a medical issue that also involves an academic leave of absence and a financial aid question). 881 Commonwealth Avenue, 617-358-1818, <http://www.bu.edu/usc/>

Arts & Sciences Experiential Learning Connector: Internships, volunteer opportunities, jobs, and a guide to courses with "hands-on" components. <https://www.bu.edu/cas/academics/undergraduate-education/arts-sciences-in-action/connector/>

Center for Career Development: Visit them early to ask about things like resume optimization, funding for unpaid semester or summer internships, and summer jobs. 100 Bay State Road, 6th floor. <https://www.bu.edu/careers/>

Newbury Center: Supporting and celebrating first-generation undergraduate, graduate, and professional students at BU. They are friendly, and many of their services and workshops are available even to students who are not technically first-generation college students but whose needs the office can help address. Resources and events at <https://www.bu.edu/newbury-center/>

Behavioral Medicine and Mental Health Support: Psychiatrists, psychologists, clinical nurse specialists, licensed mental health clinicians, and licensed clinical social workers are available to address the psychological and adjustment issues that arise in a university community. They can also support you in supporting others. <http://www.bu.edu/shs/behavioral-medicine/>. 881 Commonwealth Ave., 1st Floor, 617-353-3569

Sexual Assault Response Program: If you or a BU student you know has experienced a traumatic incident, SARP provides rapid, confidential, compassionate, supportive, and free-of-charge advocacy and assistance. 930 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215. 617-353-SARP (7277) or sarp@bu.edu, <http://www.bu.edu/sarp/>

LJ320 Check-in - Hybrid Contract Grading

[What is Contract Grading?]

Grading contracts are a system of grading that is based primarily on your *labor* and *effort*. Your grade will not be based on a subjective evaluation of your final product. Grading contracts are valuable for a number of reasons, including the fact they:

- Offer you the opportunity to be experimental and exploratory when you speak;
- Do not unfairly penalize or reward you for how much experience with speaking you have prior to entering our class; all students have the same potential to earn an A;
- Award students who are investing the time, energy and effort into learning.

While grading contracts focus on quantifiable outcomes (attendance, participation, completed work), quality matters as well since we will be using hybrid contract grading system. You are expected to carefully study the current and previous lessons and converse with others to meet certain goals and criteria. Your instructor believes grading contracts function on the principle that quality speaking is the result of one's efforts on practicing, understanding feedback from others, and making constant improvements.

[General Terms of Agreement for a grade of B]

1. You agree to complete 4 Check-ins throughout the semester with basic labor-emphasis contract. Basic labor-emphasis contract is that you agree;
 - to come to Check-in appointments on time.
 - to converse with your instructor actively regarding the contents or topics in the lesson for 10 minutes.
 - to no make-ups for Check-in if missed.

[General Terms of Agreement for beyond a grade of B]

1. You agree to complete more than 4 Check-ins throughout the semester with basic labor-emphasis contract or advanced labor-emphasis contract. Advanced labor-emphasis contract is you agree;
 - to comply with what's on the basic-emphasis contract.
 - to use abundant number of new grammar patterns in the lesson.
 - to use a variety of new vocabulary in the lesson.
 - to have a positive attitude and sense of humor.
2. You agree to listen to the evaluative feedback from the instructor (or others) and strive to achieve higher goals. Error-free speaking is not expected, but the instructor asks you to take an active role in developing your use of Japanese.
3. You agree to meet with the instructor (no more than twice a semester), if you are contacted, so that we can determine how your Check-ins affect your final grade.

Grading contracts in the field of rhetoric and composition originate from researchers like Dr. Peter Elbow and Dr. Asao Inoue who have sought more equitable and just grading practices. This grading contract has been adapted from their work, as well as from the contracts of Dr. Missy Watson, Dr. Nicole Howell, and Dr. Kate Navickas.

***By staying in our course, you agree to all of the above terms, and I agree to keep track of the above details responsibly and enforce them democratically.**