JAPN 10100 1, JAPN 10100 1 - Elementary Modern Japanese I - Instructor(s): Miku Fukasaku

Project Title: **College Course Feedback - Autumn 2023**

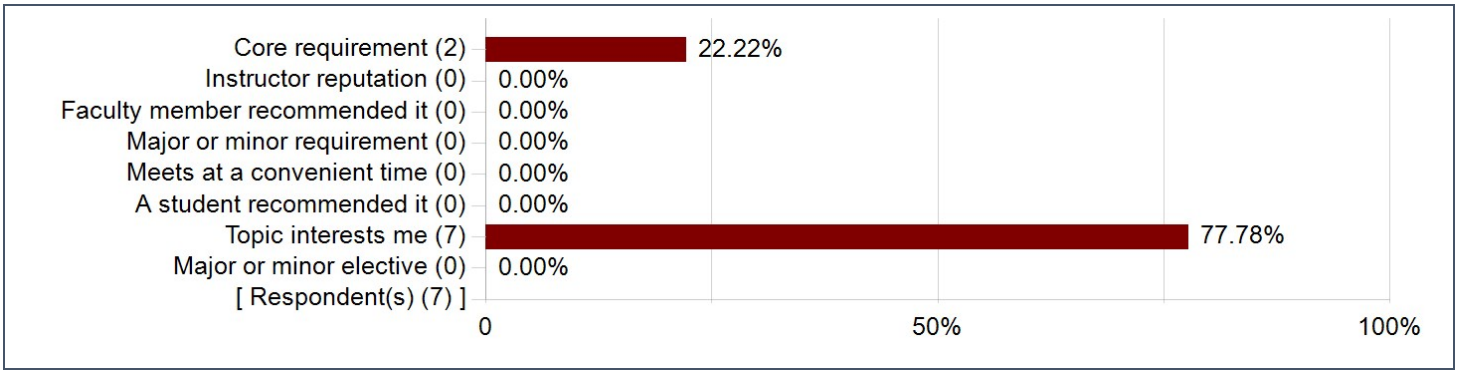
Number Enrolled: **8**
Number of Responses: **7**

Report Comments

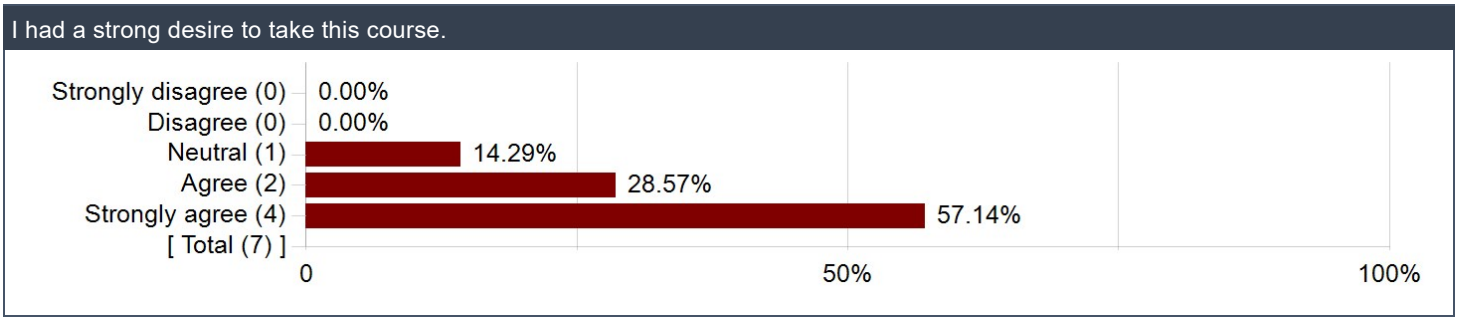
Opinions expressed in these evaluations are those of students enrolled in the specific course and do not represent the University.

Creation Date: **Friday, February 2, 2024**

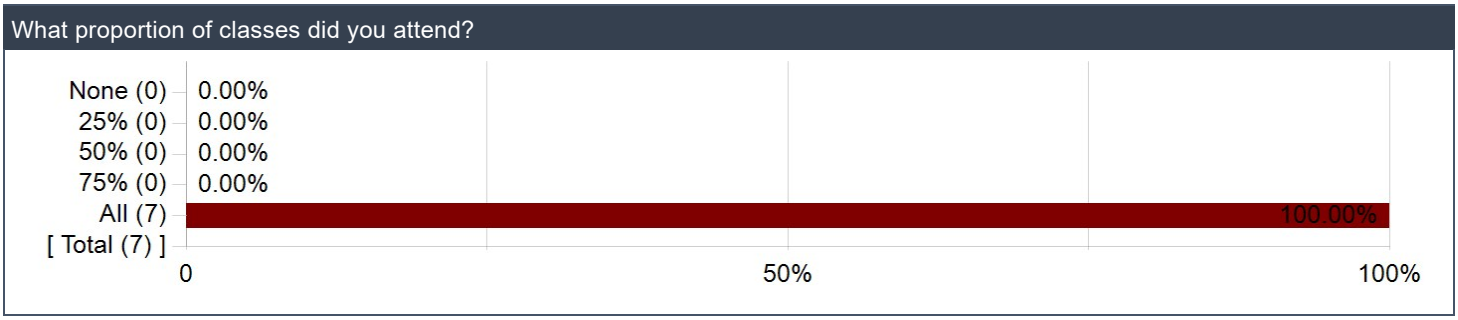
Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)



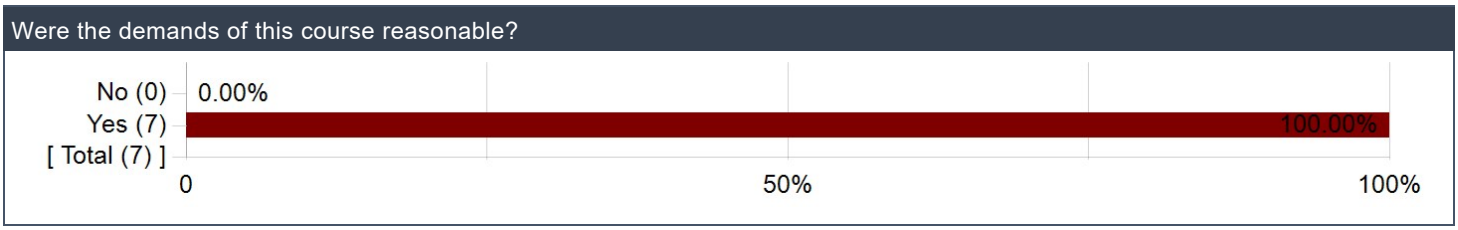
I had a strong desire to take this course.



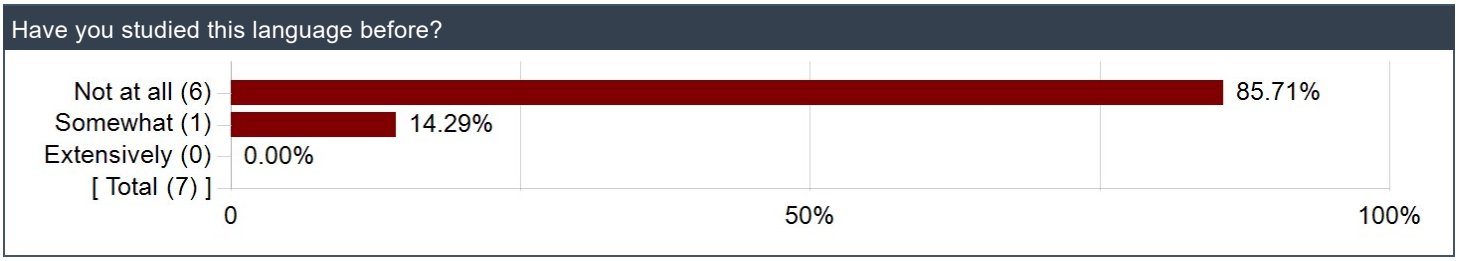
What proportion of classes did you attend?



Were the demands of this course reasonable?



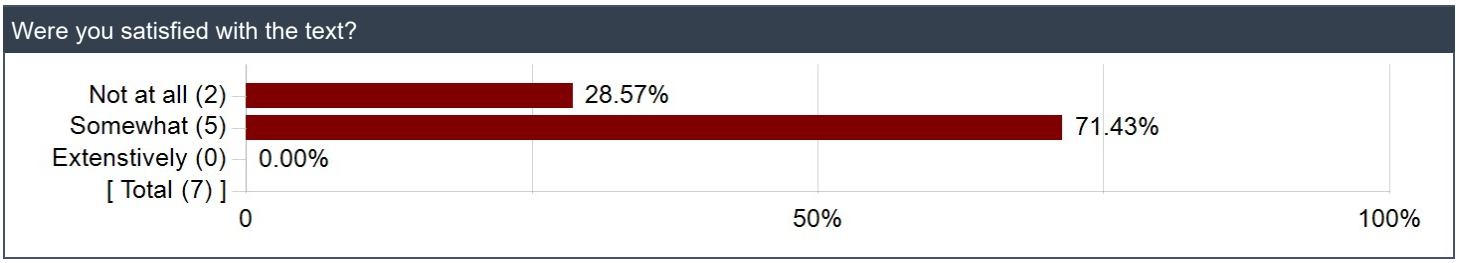
Have you studied this language before?



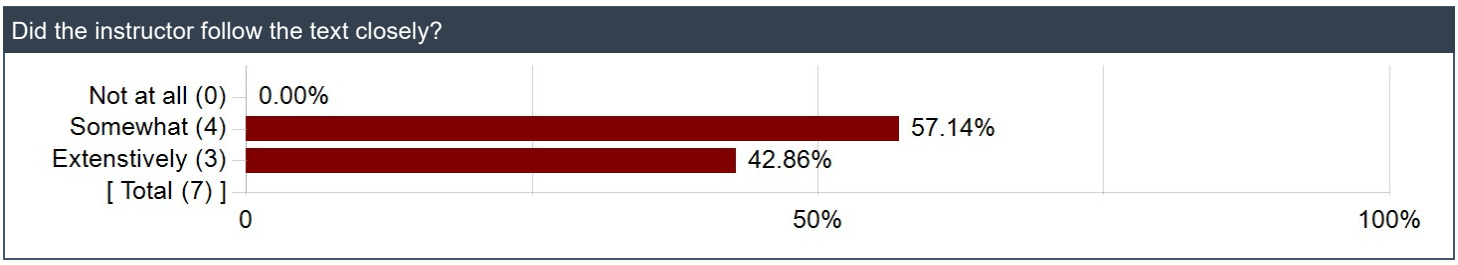
Rate the extent to which different aspects of the language were stressed:

	Mean	Median	Not At All	A Little	Some	A Lot	Extremely	Vigorously
Speaking	3.57	3.00	0.00%	0.00%	57.14%	28.57%	14.29%	0.00%
Spelling	3.86	4.00	0.00%	14.29%	28.57%	14.29%	42.86%	0.00%
Reading	4.57	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	28.57%	0.00%	57.14%	14.29%
Writing	4.57	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	28.57%	14.29%	28.57%	28.57%
Grammar	4.86	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	14.29%	0.00%	71.43%	14.29%
Vocabulary	4.29	5.00	0.00%	14.29%	14.29%	0.00%	71.43%	0.00%

Were you satisfied with the text?



Did the instructor follow the text closely?



Explain:

Comments
The course was very fast and some parts of the textbook were quickly skimmed over
I would argue that the textbook was probably the least helpful part of the class. I love this Japanese class but I feel like the textbook is holding it back. For one, I really don't understand the progression of this textbook. This textbook is very different from the ones I used when I learned other languages like Spanish, Chinese, and English. My biggest problem was definitely the vocabulary introduced per unit. I felt like there was too little vocabulary in this textbook and I often struggled to find things to write in writing assignments. Furthermore, I don't understand why the first chapter would require us to know niche words like 人類学 and we had to wait until chapter 6 to learn how to count. Another thing I don't understand about it is why we learn the masu form of verbs before we learn the dictionary form. While I do understand that masu form has relatively easy conjugation, I felt like it would make more sense for the textbook to teach the dictionary form and slowly lead into how to do conjugation. Considering how fast pace the class is supposed to be, I believe it was quite unfortunate that the lack of vocabs and verbs in the textbook held back the amount of new skills I could gain from this class. I think the textbook is way too slow and teaches way too little vocabulary, so I didn't really like it.
Personally I don't have too much experience with Japanese, but given my limited knowledge I thought it was alright. Although the teacher mostly went over the concepts within the textbook, there were some other details that were taught in the lessons not fully explained through the textbook.
The textbook is really old and bizarrely organized. You don't even learn how to properly conjugate verbs until like the eighth lesson when you really should've learned it as soon as you started using verbs, for example. (The textbook also demands you learn kanji at a pretty insane rate.) You get the impression that the only reason it's used is because the author used to be on the faculty. Switching to a better textbook would probably be the single best thing they could do to improve this course.
The instructor would follow the vocabulary, Kanji, and grammar rules of each chapter.
The text was good but the format made it somewhat inconvenient for studying grammar. Specifically, it introduces all the new important phrases and grammar structures all in one large section and then all the practice is at the end, which makes it a little overwhelming personally.

Was the vocabulary useful?

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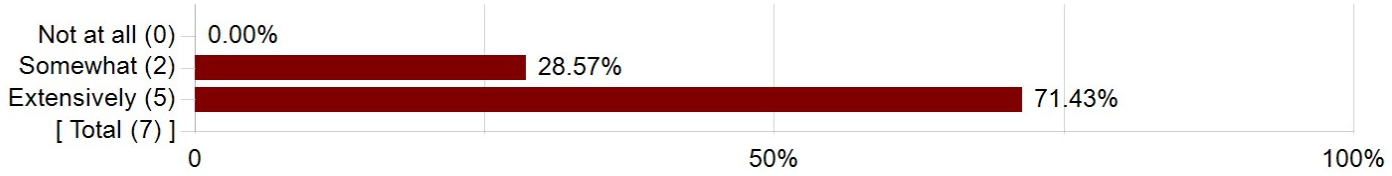


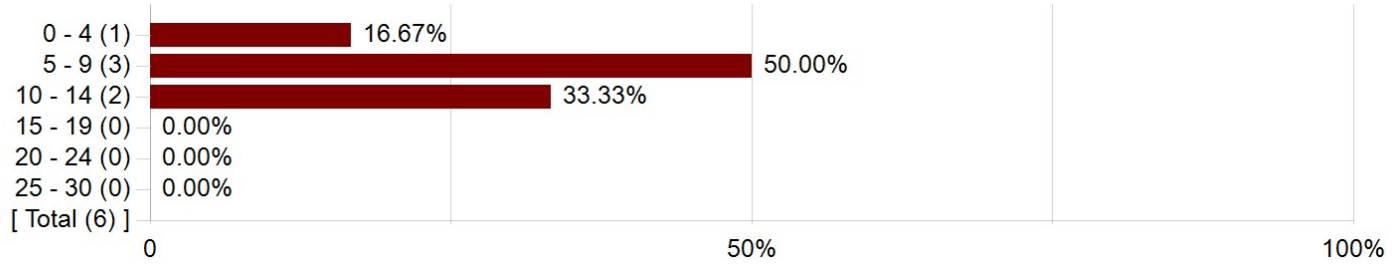
Why?

Comments
Gave good insights to Japanese language and were usable in our conversations in class
The vocabulary was very useful, especially the ones related to introduction and daily conversations like weather and hobbies. However, there was too little vocab in the textbook, so I often felt like I couldn't make conversations too long. This was a big problem for me during the oral exams. While I understood perfectly what the teacher asked and I had a good idea of how I should reply, the conversation usually just ended in awkward silence because I didn't have the vocabulary available to expand my response. Hence, while the vocabulary is definitely useful, I felt like more could have been taught.
If you don't know the vocab, you won't understand a single thing.
The words the book insists on teaching you are kinda strangely selected. Basically, there's a dialogue for each lesson, and then the vocabulary list is just the list of words that were used in the dialogue, which means the word lists are vaguely themed but badly prioritized (like, why am I learning the word for 'art history' before the words for common everyday objects)
I learned new vocabulary every week. I was building up my vocabulary in a new language.
The vocabulary was helpful for the dialogue settings we dealt with, which made it helpful without being too much.

Describe the format of the class (lecture, drills, etc.). Was this format productive? Please be specific.

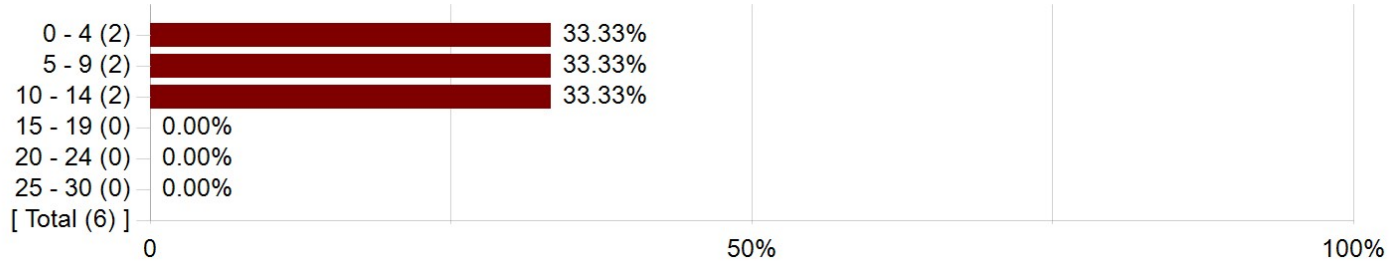
Comments
Mostly lectures, with sections dedicated to drilling and practicing the grammar learned. It was very productive as it gave us information and expected us to use it, but retainment required a lot more time spent out of class.
The class is a classic slide lecture–based class. However, I do feel like Fukasaku sensei no teaching style was very effective, and I felt like every class was very enjoyable. She made sure that we practiced our speaking skills every class, forcing us to speak aloud in Japanese, reading her slides and the dialogue practices. After introducing a new grammar concept, she always made sure to add a practice section for us to discuss with our partners. She then called on us to present our answers, which helped us make sure we understood the new grammar and helped us practice speaking. The listening practices were also very helpful, especially in preparing us for both the oral exam and the final exam. Overall, the format of the class was fantastic, but it was unfortunately held back by the textbook.
Lecture, mixed with drills, decently effective, wish there was more free–speaking moments as my speaking ability had obvious lacks. The drills became somewhat formulaic, would rather it have more variations and callbacks to previous lessons.
You meet every day, go through slides explaining grammar concepts with examples, and practice by reading dialogues with classmates. It works pretty well (the slides are very useful) but I wish there was more focus on having conversations with classmates without just directly reading from the slide, because it feels like it's too easy to say all the dialogue out loud but not actually understand how to use the grammar constructs to build sentences yourself.
We would learn from slides, stopping frequently to practice the different lessons we were taught with partners.
We generally would introduce a new grammar point and then go into speaking drills where we would apply it to various sentences and examples. This was helpful in keeping me engaged and helped the grammar stick with me.

How many hours were you expected to study each week for the class?



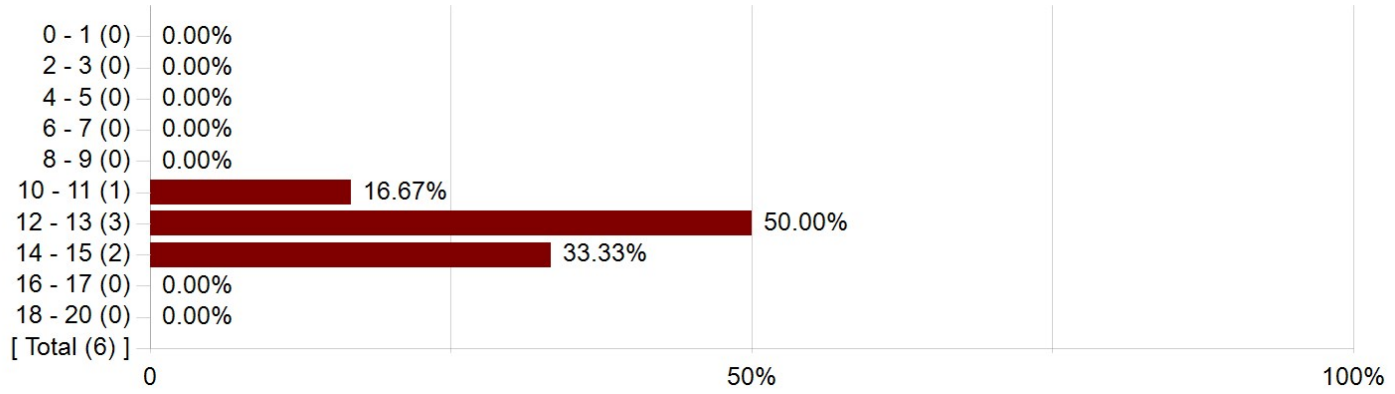
Statistics	Value
Response Count	6
Mean	7.67
Median	6.00
Standard Deviation	3.98

How many hours did you spend?



Statistics	Value
Response Count	6
Mean	7.17
Median	6.00
Standard Deviation	3.66

How many written quizzes were given?



Statistics	Value
Response Count	6
Mean	12.67
Median	12.00
Standard Deviation	1.97

Were there daily assignments? (i.e., journals)?

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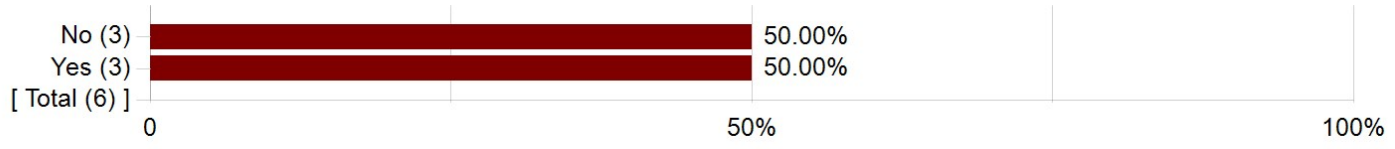
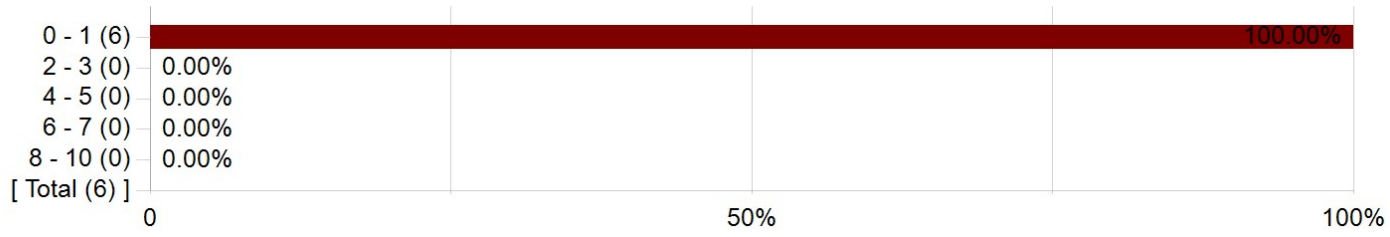


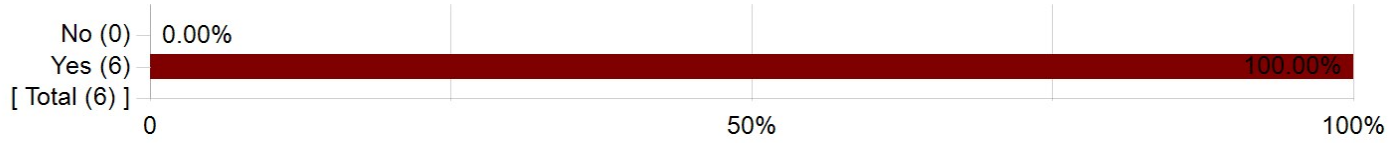
How many oral exams were given?



Statistics	Value
Response Count	6
Mean	1.00
Median	1.00
Standard Deviation	0.00

Were the oral exams fair?

Were the oral exams fair?



Were the oral exams challenging?

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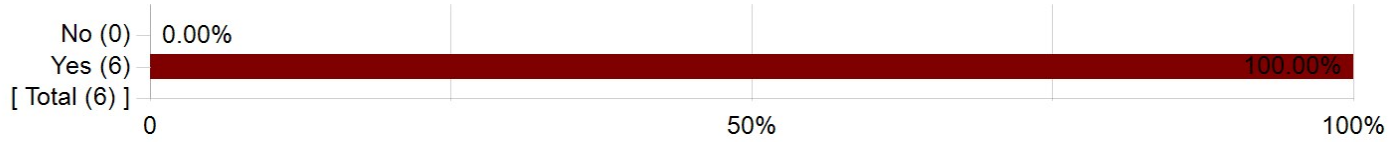
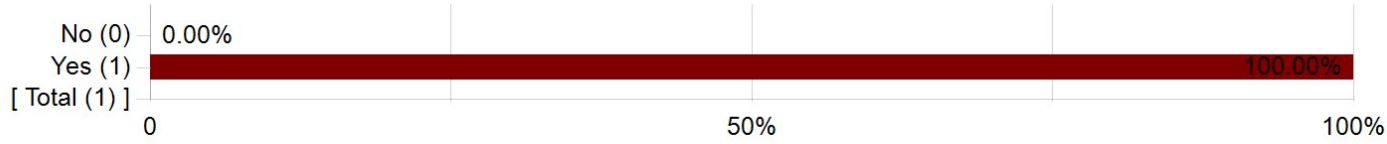


Why? Please be specific.

Comments
The oral assessment covered what was taught in class, and there was grace for us considering it was the first time that many of us spoke Japanese in conversation.
The oral exam was very challenging, probably the hardest part of the course. I felt like I was relatively underprepared for it, especially as the exam uses grammar that we literally just learned on the day I took the oral exam. As I mentioned, I struggled mostly with making the conversation sound normal, as I felt like I did not have the vocab and grammar to expand the conversation. While the oral exam was definitely hard, I felt like it was also a big learning experience. While I was relatively confident in my writing, reading, and listening skills, the oral exam highlighted my weakness in speaking. I felt like it would have been much better if we had multiple oral exams during the quarter or if we incorporated more scenario based dialogue and free talking (There was more of this during the end of the quarter which was good) during class to improve speaking skills.
First time Japanese learner, it made me nervous and I was not able to fully preform
It's unnerving talking to a native speaker with what little you know of the language, but it wasn't really that bad because they were fine with you asking for the meaning/translation of words.
It was difficult to maintain a normal conversation in another language. The prompts and questions asked helped direct the conversation.
For me the hardest part was understanding what was being asked, because my listening skills are not very good.

Was your Language Lab experience useful?

Was your Language Lab experience useful?



How would you rate your Language Lab experience?

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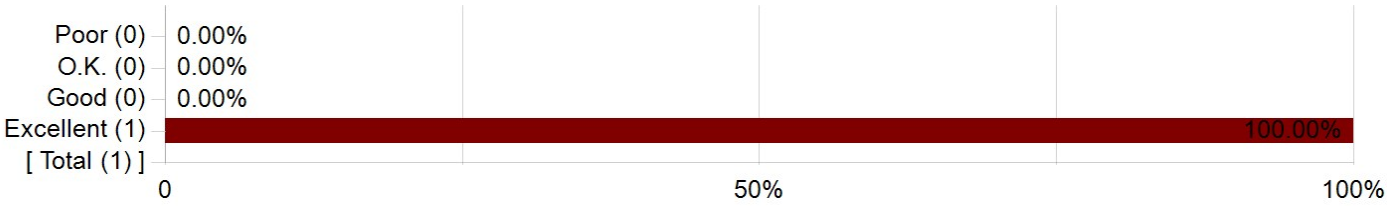

Why? Please be specific

Comments
N/A

If there were required outside activities (i.e. foreign films or SCOLA), describe your experience.

Comments
n/a
N/A

Was your instructor organized?

Mean	Median	Very Unorganized	Somewhat Unorganized	Fairly Organized	Somewhat Organized	Very Organized
4.71	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	28.57%	71.43%

Explain

Comments
There were lesson plans but rarely in some cases we weren't able to finish and it had to be moved to the next class
As far as I know, Fukasaku sensei was very organized. She always had class slides prepared and she always uploads them quickly after the class was over. She grades assignments quickly, often finishing on the day of submission. Her class follows the progression of the textbook very well and her slides were always the first place I go if I ever have confusion with the homework.
Most of the times there were no issues, but occasionally there were some technology issues.
Slides were posted on Canvas every day at the same time after class, and quizzes/homework were announced well in advance.
She would always have organized slides for lecture.
We had a very clearly laid out schedule and followed the lessons in the textbook. There was a lot of work due to the nature of the class but our professor did a very good job of making it manageable and organized. One note that I would mention is that we would sometimes have days with very short homework and others with a very large amount and also a quiz for example, so sometimes it could be slightly more balanced out.

Were cultural units included?

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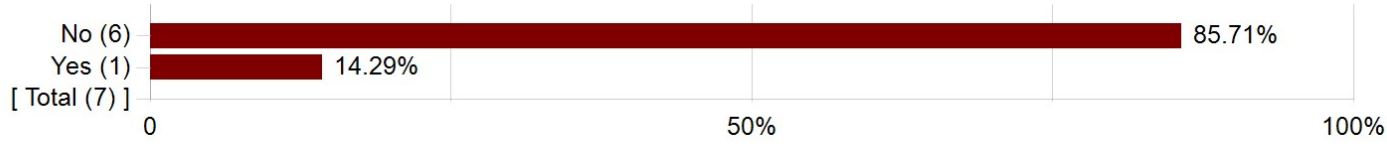

Were they interesting or helpful?

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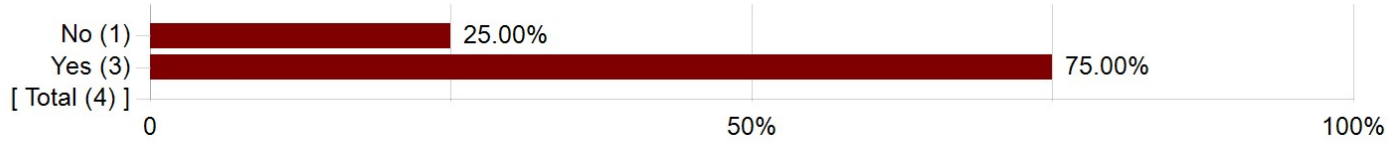

Overall, would you say you had a good instructor?

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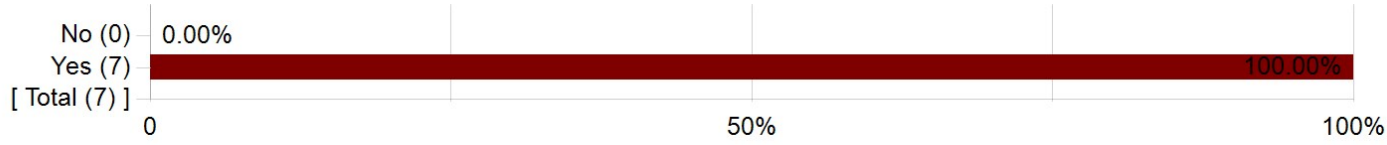

Why?

Comments
Very kind and thoughtful in our lessons, engaged us in the language in class, encouraged us to use the language, and used collaborative methods in instruction.
Like I mentioned, I like how organized Fukasaku sensei was. Her lecture format was straightforward and effective. The homework was all very excellent reviews for the new grammar taught in class. Despite how many different grammar concepts taught this quarter, I felt like because of her teaching, I was able to retain most of those concepts. I genuinely enjoyed being in this class and it would have been perfect if the textbook taught more vocabs and grammar so I could improve my Japanese more quickly.
I would say I learned a lot in this class and it was a welcome learning environment. However I wish there were more speaking practices.
Fukasaku is engaging and fun, and always seems to have the most energy in the room (probably because we're all tired college kids having to get up at 8:30 for her class.) She's very good at listening in on conversations during speaking practice and making sure people correct their mistakes, and she cares a lot about the success of her students. Her slides are really nice too!
She had a lot of energy, especially for such an early class.
Overall our professor was very well organized and explained things very well. I thought her greatest strength was her enthusiasm which made the class much more fun for me, especially considering how tired I usually was at 8:30.

Did taking this course improve your language skills significantly?

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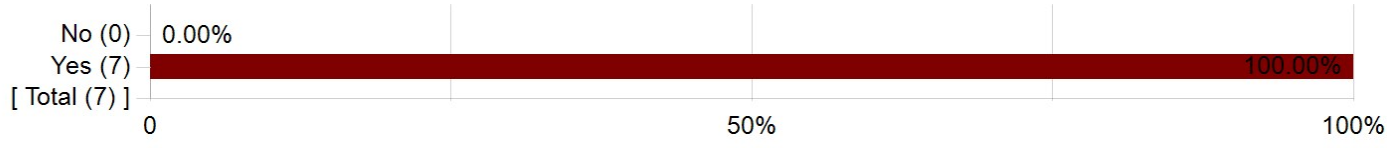

In what way?

Comments
I did not know any Japanese prior to this class, and know I know the alphabet system and can read and write to a basic extent.
The course improved every single aspect of my Japanese. While I did incorporate some of the skills from the other 4 languages I know (especially kanji from Traditional Mandarin), I felt like I was able to grow more in my ability as a language learner thanks to this class. Despite how fast pace this class may be, it improved my language skills in the sense that I am able to learn new grammar and vocabs much faster than before. I also feel more confident in my Japanese speaking and listening.
I learned two alphabets and a bunch of characters, and I can understand simple sentences and conjugate verbs and adjectives now. You really learn a lot for how short the quarter is.
I can now understand the basic structure of sentences in Japanese and pick up on certain parts of a conversation.
I have elementary understanding of a handful of words and phrases, and can read basic scripts. Even being very limited it is cool to be able to understand the occasional word and phrase.

How would you improve this course?

Comments
More opportunities to practice.
Honestly, this course was excellent. I felt like it could be improved by simply changing the textbook into one with more linear progression and vocabs for me to use in conversation and writing.
Include more free speaking assessments
Change to a textbook that was written in this century. Please. I saw Noto–sensei walking his dog on the quad and it made me feel bad about how much I complain about his textbook, but it has to be done. Also, slow down the rate of learning characters. Starting kanji earlier to more evenly space them out so you aren't learning 15 characters a week would be ideal, because the single greatest thing bringing down my grade in this class was the kanji quizzes. Any extra resources for learning kanji would be great.
I think the only thing would be to practice speaking freely slightly more since I often struggled to voice coherent ideas when given the chance.

Would you recommend this class to another student?

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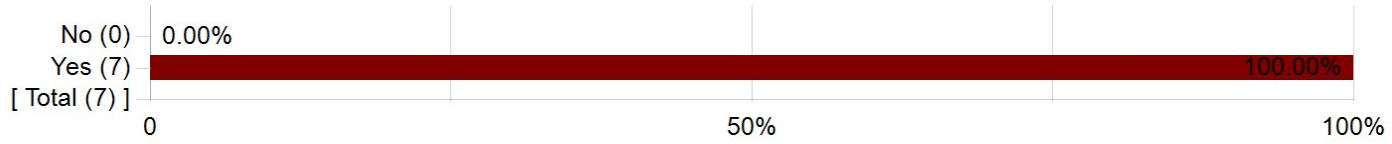

Why?

Comments
It's a very fun and engaging class if you are interested in Japanese at all, and although fast it is mostly manageable.
If you want to learn Japanese, I feel like this course would be absolutely fantastic. Its fast pace yet not overwhelming. It makes you feel like you are genuinely learning and gives you a sense of progress and accomplishment.
It's a good language to learn.
Most other language classes I've taken have felt like I'm learning vocabulary and it's up to me to transfer that into actual acquisition of the language. In this class you actually feel like you're learning a language and it feels great. It's a ton of work (probably more work than my SOSC and HUMA combined), and yet I enjoyed it and will keep taking it the rest of the year (and potentially next year). Try not to get into an 8:30 section like I did though.
I think it is a great way to learn another language.
I found the class to be very interesting and more importantly very fun! I took it solely out of interest and am gladly continuing with the sequence going forward.