



Japanese Option Student Journey

A Two-Year Milestone Guide

How to Use This Guide

This guide presents recommended milestones from the period before a student's first semester through graduation and transfer. Use it with the official Japanese Studies degree requirements, CUNYfirst, DegreeWorks, and regular academic advising. Exact deadlines and individual circumstances vary, so students should confirm important decisions with the appropriate college office.

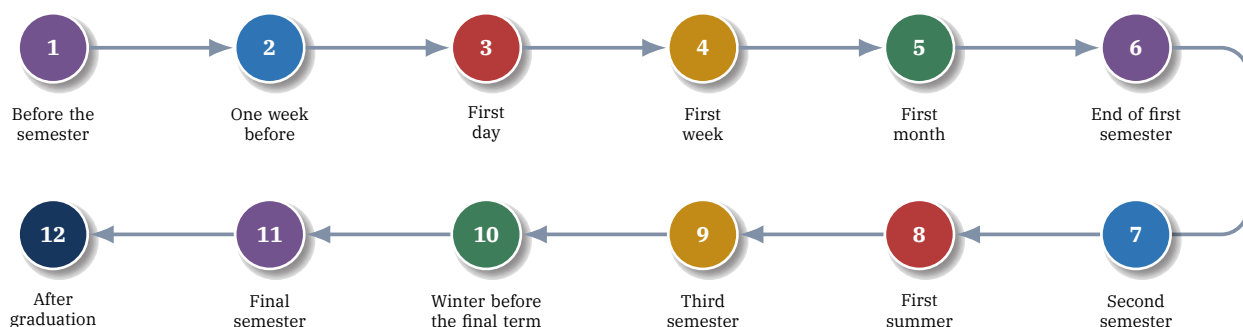
 **Academic progress**

 **Japanese development**

 **Community**

 **Future planning**

The two-year journey at a glance



A note for part-time students

The two-year sequence is an example, not a requirement. Part-time students can follow the same milestones according to credits completed—approximately the first 15 credits, 30 credits, 45 credits, and final 15 credits—rather than by calendar semester.

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Before the First Semester

Build a sound academic and financial foundation.

- ☐  **Academic progress** **Confirm that Japanese Studies is your official option.** Check your CUNYfirst and DegreeWorks records. You should see *Liberal Arts Japanese Option* (or sometimes just as *Liberal Arts*). If the major or option is incorrect, meet with Student Advising Services in B-102 (appointments through Navigate; (718) 482-6070) and notify Japanese Option director Tomonori Nagano in B-234FF (tnagano@lagcc.cuny.edu).
- ☐  **Academic progress** **Review the degree requirements and previous credits.** Read the Japanese Option degree map and identify the required Japanese, English, liberal arts, and Pathways courses. For college transfer credit, contact Credit Evaluation in C-102 at creditevaluation@lagcc.cuny.edu. For learning from work, military service, credentials, or other experience, contact Credit for Prior Learning in M-142 at (718) 482-5753 or cpl@lagcc.cuny.edu.
- ☐  **Japanese development** **Complete Japanese placement when appropriate.** The Modern Languages Program uses student self-assessment for course placement. Students with previous Japanese study should consult Japanese faculty or Julio Rosario, Modern Languages Lab coordinator, in B-206 at (718) 482-5466 or jrosario@lagcc.cuny.edu before registering.



- ❑ **Future planning** **Meet with an advisor before registering.** Schedule an appointment through Navigate or visit Student Advising Services in B-102; call (718) 482-6070. Bring your DegreeWorks audit and mention plans involving transfer, study abroad, employment, or part-time attendance.
- ❑ **Future planning** **Resolve registration and financial-aid holds.** Check CUNYfirst and Navigate for the office responsible for each hold. For financial-aid questions, contact Student Financial Services in C-107 at (718) 482-5242 or financialaid@lagcc.cuny.edu; for immunization holds, contact Health Services in MB-40 at (718) 482-5280 or Health-Center@lagcc.cuny.edu.
- ❑ **Community** **Learn how the program communicates.** Check your LaGuardia email regularly. Contact tnagano@lagcc.cuny.edu for the current Japanese Option and Japan Club communication channels and announcements about orientations, scholarships, transfer workshops, and events.

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One Week Before the Semester

Prepare your schedule, technology, and study routine.

- ❑ **Academic progress** **Confirm your schedule and classroom locations.** Review the days, times, formats, and locations of every course. If your first class is online, visit Brightspace to find information about virtual (Zoom) meetings.
- ❑ **Academic progress** **Obtain required course materials.** Check the syllabus or bookstore listing before purchasing textbooks, workbooks, or access codes.
- ❑ **Future planning** **Activate and test LaGuardia technology.** Confirm access to college email, CUNYfirst, DegreeWorks, Brightspace, Navigate, and other college technology platforms. Contact the DoIT Help Desk in B-333 at ITHelp@lagcc.cuny.edu or (718) 482-6134 if you cannot sign in.
- ❑ **Japanese development** **Install a Japanese keyboard.** Add Japanese input to your phone and computer, then practice switching between English and Japanese. Typing hiragana, katakana, and kanji will support coursework and independent study.
- ❑ **Future planning** **Add important dates to a calendar.** Record holidays, examination periods, registration dates, and tuition deadlines. Add assignment dates when syllabi become available and set reminders in advance.
- ❑ **Japanese development** **Plan regular Japanese study periods.** Japanese is learned most effectively through frequent practice. Reserve time throughout the week for vocabulary, kanji, listening, reading, writing, and speaking.

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The First Day

Learn expectations and make an early connection.

- ❑ **Academic progress** **Attend every class.** The first meeting often includes essential information about attendance, assignments, grading, and materials. If an emergency prevents attendance, contact the professor *prior to the first meeting*.
- ❑ **Academic progress** **Read each syllabus carefully.** Pay attention to attendance rules, late-work policies, examination dates, required technology, and communication preferences. Enter major deadlines in your calendar. If you didn't receive the syllabus during the first session, ask your professor how you can obtain one. It's your right to receive the syllabus before the withdrawal deadline.



- ❑ **Academic progress** **Save the professor's contact information.** Record the professor's email address, office location, and office hours. Office hours are for questions, feedback, and academic conversation—not only emergencies. If you cannot find the contact information, look up your professor at <https://apps.laguardia.edu/directory/>
- ❑ **Community** **Introduce yourself to a classmate.** A dependable classmate can help confirm assignments and become a study partner. Language courses also require partners for regular speaking practice.
- ❑ **Academic progress** **Confirm all online platforms.** Sign in to each required homework, vocabulary, video, or learning platform. Report an access problem before the first assignment is due.
- ❑ **Japanese development** **Raise placement concerns immediately.** Tell the professor if the course seems much easier or harder than expected. The Modern Languages Program now uses student self-assessment rather than a placement exam; for help choosing a Japanese level, contact Julio Rosario, Modern Languages Lab coordinator, in B-206 at (718) 482-5466 or jrosario@lagcc.cuny.edu.

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The First Week

Create a support network and sustainable routine.

- ❑ **Community** **Attend the Japanese Option orientation.** Orientation introduces the program requirements, faculty, transfer opportunities, and extracurricular activities. Bring questions and introduce yourself to Japanese Option director Tomonori Nagano (B-234FF, (718) 482-5484, tnagano@lagcc.cuny.edu).
- ❑ **Community** **Join a Japan-related student activity.** Consider the Japan Club, COIL activities, cultural workshops, or program events. See the program blog at <https://chrysanthemum.commons.gc.cuny.edu>. Contact tnagano@lagcc.cuny.edu for current Japan Club and Japanese Option communication channels. Participation builds friendships, communication skills, and résumé experience.
- ❑ **Future planning** **Create a realistic weekly schedule.** Include classes, commuting, employment, family responsibilities, meals, sleep, and study time. A sustainable schedule is better than an ambitious plan that cannot be maintained.
- ❑ **Academic progress** **Locate academic-support services.** Start with the Modern Languages Lab (B-206), Writing Center (B-200, (718) 482-5688, WCLab@lagcc.cuny.edu), and Student Advising Services (B-102, (718) 482-6070). Use Navigate to make appointments.
- ❑ **Academic progress** **Begin an ePortfolio or academic archive.** Create organized folders for papers, presentations, recordings, certificates, résumés, and reflections. For ePortfolio help, visit the Open Lab in B-121 or contact the ePortfolio Program at (718) 482-5407 or eportfolio@lagcc.cuny.edu.
- ❑ **Academic progress** **Discuss accommodations or personal circumstances early.** For academic accommodations, contact the Office of Accessibility in M-102 at (718) 482-5279 or OSD@lagcc.cuny.edu. For free confidential counseling, contact the Wellness Center in C-249 at (718) 482-5471 or WellnessCenter@lagcc.cuny.edu; also speak privately with the appropriate advisor or professor.

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The First Month

Check your progress before small problems grow.

- ❑ **Academic progress** **Evaluate your academic progress.** Review attendance, assignment scores, and understanding of course material. Meet with the professor or use Navigate to locate tutoring and advising now if you



are struggling. Meet with your professor before the withdrawal deadline, which is usually in the 5th week of the semester, if you are not sure if you are going to pass the course or not.

- ❑ **Japanese development** **Review your Japanese study methods.** Determine which techniques help you retain vocabulary, grammar, and kanji. Try Anki flashcards, handwriting, shadowing, listening, and short reviews, but use a manageable number of resources consistently. Japanese tutoring is available through the Modern Languages Lab in B-206.
- ❑ **Community** **Participate in a language or cultural activity.** Attend at least one event outside regular class. Afterwards, write a brief reflection connecting the experience to your academic or professional goals.
- ❑ **Future planning** **Create an initial résumé.** Include education, employment, volunteer service, languages, technical skills, and student activities. The Center for Career and Professional Development (CCPD) reviews résumés in B-114; call (718) 482-5235 or email career@lagcc.cuny.edu.
- ❑ **Future planning** **Research possible transfer destinations.** Identify at least two colleges with Japanese, Asian Studies, East Asian Studies, or a related field. Compare costs, location, academic requirements, language courses, and financial aid. Transfer Services is in B-215 at (718) 482-5185 or transfer@lagcc.cuny.edu.
- ❑ **Japanese development** **Select an initial language goal.** Your goal might involve completing the current course, holding a short conversation, or preparing eventually for JLPT N5 or N4. Choose a specific goal that can be measured.

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End of the First Semester

Reflect, register, and prepare for the next opportunity.

- ❑ **Academic progress** **Review degree progress with an advisor.** Bring your DegreeWorks audit to Student Advising Services in B-102 or to an appointment scheduled through Navigate. Confirm which requirements you completed and which courses should come next.
- ❑ **Japanese development** **Register early for the next Japanese course.** Language learning is easier without a long interruption. Register as soon as eligible to improve your chance of obtaining the course and schedule you need; ask your Japanese professor about the appropriate next level.
- ❑ **Academic progress** **Check how courses apply to the degree.** Review DegreeWorks and investigate any course shown as unused or unexpected elective credit. Student Advising Services can review degree requirements; questions about incoming college credit go to creditevaluation@lagcc.cuny.edu.
- ❑ **Academic progress** **Select work for your ePortfolio.** Save at least one strong paper, presentation, recording, or Japanese assignment. Add a short explanation of the skills it demonstrates and what you would improve. Contact eportfolio@lagcc.cuny.edu or visit the B-121 Open Lab for technical help.
- ❑ **Future planning** **Update your résumé.** Add coursework, club participation, volunteer work, workshops, and presentations. Describe these experiences through skills such as communication, research, organization, and teamwork; CCPD in B-114 offers feedback (career@lagcc.cuny.edu, (718) 482-5235).
- ❑ **Japanese development** **Ask for feedback on Japanese progress.** Speak with your professor during office hours about strengths and areas for improvement. Ask what to practice during the break and what proficiency goal would be appropriate next.
- ❑ **Japanese development** **Complete a language self-assessment.** Reflect separately on speaking, listening, reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary, and kanji. Use the results to set two or three goals for the next semester.
- ❑ **Future planning** **Investigate summer opportunities.** Look for courses, jobs, internships, volunteering, study



abroad, and scholarships. Check CCPD opportunities through Handshake and ask Transfer Services in B-215 about transfer-related programs; many summer opportunities have early deadlines.

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The Second Semester

Explore transfer, scholarships, and proficiency goals.

- ☐
Japanese development
Continue the Japanese-language sequence. Build directly on vocabulary and grammar from the previous course. Review earlier material during the opening weeks if there was a long break.
- ☐
Future planning
Attend a transfer information session. Check Transfer Services in B-215 at (718) 482-5185 or transfer@lagcc.cuny.edu for workshops about Queens College, Hunter College, Temple University Japan, and other destinations. Ask how LaGuardia credits transfer and whether Japanese placement is required.
- ☐
Future planning
Create a transfer comparison chart. Compare tuition, financial aid, transportation or housing, academic programs, transfer policies, and application requirements. Use CUNY Transfer Explorer and verify results with Transfer Services and the receiving college.
- ☐
Future planning
Begin researching scholarships. Track eligibility rules, required materials, and approximate deadlines. Include LaGuardia Foundation scholarships (E-517, foundationscholarship@lagcc.cuny.edu) as well as transfer, study-abroad, language-study, and general scholarships.
- ☐
Future planning
Attend a career-development workshop. Ask the Center for Career and Professional Development in B-114 to review your résumé and help with a cover letter or professional profile; call (718) 482-5235 or email career@lagcc.cuny.edu. Practice describing the value of your language and intercultural skills.
- ☐
Community
Participate consistently outside class. Regular involvement is more meaningful than attending many unrelated events once. Take responsibility for a small task when possible.
- ☐
Japanese development
Explore a proficiency examination. Review JLPT N5 or N4 expectations and try official sample questions. Use the results to guide study, while continuing speaking and writing practice not measured by the JLPT.
- ☐
Community
Develop relationships with faculty. Participate thoughtfully, attend office hours, and ask substantive questions. Future recommendations are stronger when professors know your work, goals, and development.

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The First Summer

Use the break to gain experience and preserve momentum.

- ☐
Academic progress
Take courses when they support your plan. Summer courses can complete requirements or balance a later semester. Confirm in DegreeWorks and with Student Advising Services that each course applies; make sure the compressed schedule fits employment and family responsibilities.
- ☐
Future planning
Participate in study abroad when possible. Start with Japanese Option faculty and Transfer Services in B-215 to identify CUNY programs. Confirm academic credit with Student Advising Services and funding with Student Financial Services in C-107 (financialaid@lagcc.cuny.edu); also verify insurance, travel documents, and safety requirements well before departure.
- ☐
Future planning
Work, volunteer, or pursue an internship. Search Handshake and consult CCPD in B-114



(career@lagcc.cuny.edu). An experience does not need to be directly related to Japan: customer service, teaching, office work, leadership, and community service all develop transferable skills.

- ❑ **Japanese development** **Continue studying Japanese independently.** Review vocabulary, read graded materials, listen to Japanese, and practice speaking. A modest consistent routine makes the next course much easier.
- ❑ **Japanese development** **Prepare for the JLPT when appropriate.** Use official sample questions or a diagnostic test to identify weaknesses and create a study schedule. Ask Japanese faculty for level guidance and supplement JLPT preparation with speaking and writing.
- ❑ **Future planning** **Visit possible transfer colleges.** Attend a tour or virtual session and speak with admissions and the Japanese or East Asian Studies department. Ask Transfer Services in B-215 to help you prepare questions about transfer credit, placement, scholarships, advising, and study in Japan.
- ❑ **Future planning** **Develop your ePortfolio and essay.** Organize your strongest materials and add short reflections. Use the ePortfolio Open Lab in B-121 for technical help and the Writing Center in B-200 (WCLab@lagcc.cuny.edu) for application-essay feedback.
- ❑ **Future planning** **Check future deadlines.** Some scholarships and programs require applications many months in advance. Create a calendar for opportunities you may pursue during the next academic year and confirm every date on the sponsoring organization's current page.

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The Third Semester

Turn exploration into applications and leadership.

- ❑ **Academic progress** **Complete a formal graduation review.** Meet with Student Advising Services in B-102 and bring a current DegreeWorks audit. Identify every remaining requirement; earning approximately 60 credits does not automatically mean that every degree requirement is complete.
- ❑ **Future planning** **Choose a preferred transfer institution and alternatives.** Select a first choice and at least one realistic alternative. Review the list with Transfer Services in B-215; multiple options provide protection if admission, aid, housing, or personal circumstances change.
- ❑ **Future planning** **Verify transfer-credit arrangements.** Review current articulation agreements and CUNY Transfer Explorer; then consult Transfer Services (transfer@lagcc.cuny.edu) and the receiving institution. Ask specifically how Japanese, Pathways, electives, and outside credits will transfer.
- ❑ **Future planning** **Prepare transfer applications.** List every required document and complete applications gradually. Check names, dates, academic history, and written responses carefully before submission; use Transfer Services for process questions.
- ❑ **Future planning** **Request recommendation letters early.** Ask several weeks before the deadline and provide your résumé, essay, deadline, and submission instructions. Choose professors who can discuss your work and development in detail.
- ❑ **Future planning** **Revise your personal statement.** Work with faculty and the Writing Center in B-200 at (718) 482-5688 or WCLab@lagcc.cuny.edu. Explain why the particular opportunity fits your goals rather than repeating information already on your résumé.
- ❑ **Future planning** **Complete financial-aid and scholarship applications.** Submit FAFSA and other required forms early, keep confirmation messages, and respond promptly to verification requests. Student Financial Services is in C-107 at (718) 482-5242 or financialaid@lagcc.cuny.edu; Foundation Student Support is in E-517.
- ❑ **Community** **Take an active role in the program community.** Help organize an event, support a new student,



or lead an activity. Contact tnagano@lagcc.cuny.edu about current Japanese Option and Japan Club opportunities. Leadership often begins with small, dependable actions rather than a formal title.

- **Future planning** **Connect Japanese Studies with another field.** Explore combinations with business, education, technology, media, healthcare, tourism, translation, or international relations. Discuss career connections with CCPD in B-114; language ability becomes stronger professionally when paired with another skill area.

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Winter Before the Final Semester

Finish applications and compare your options carefully.

- **Future planning** **Submit remaining applications.** Confirm in each transfer or scholarship portal that the application was successfully submitted. Save confirmation numbers, dated copies of all materials, and the office contact for each application.
- **Future planning** **Check supporting documents.** Use application portals to confirm that transcripts and recommendations arrived. Follow up respectfully with the receiving institution if an item is missing.
- **Academic progress** **Apply for graduation.** After completing at least 45 credits, use CUNYfirst: Student Center > Graduation and Transcript > Application for Graduation. Confirm the filing deadline on the Registrar's graduation guide; if the option is missing, email the Graduation Team at registrar@lagcc.cuny.edu.
- **Future planning** **Compare admission and financial-aid offers.** Compare grants, scholarships, loans, tuition, fees, transportation, and housing in one table. Ask Student Financial Services in C-107 to explain LaGuardia aid, and ask each receiving college's financial-aid office for its net-cost estimate.
- **Japanese development** **Prepare for Japanese placement after transfer.** Ask the receiving Japanese department whether it requires an exam or interview and who administers it. Review earlier coursework and retain syllabi, textbooks, and work samples that document your preparation.
- **Japanese development** **Continue Japanese during the break.** Maintain a simple routine involving listening, reading, vocabulary, or conversation. Regular contact with the language protects the progress you have made.

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The Final Semester

Complete the degree and make a confident transition.

- **Academic progress** **Complete a final degree audit.** Review DegreeWorks with Student Advising Services in B-102 and verify that completed and current courses satisfy all graduation requirements. Bring any discrepancy to an advisor immediately.
- **Academic progress** **Resolve missing requirements promptly.** If a course was dropped, failed, or applied incorrectly, discuss solutions with Student Advising Services and the appropriate academic department. A later session, summer course, substitution, or revised graduation date may be necessary. Topic: Commencement attendance, registration, attire, and guest tickets
- **Academic progress** **Attend the Commencement.** The Commencement (graduation ceremony) takes place in June every year. You will need to register for attendance by March or April, buy the gown and cap (about \$20-30), and receive guest tickets. Although attendance is not a requirement, it is usually the most memorable moment of your academic experience at LaGuardia.



- ❑ **Future planning** **Confirm graduation and transfer status.** Monitor your LaGuardia email, CUNYfirst graduation status, and transfer portals for decisions and requests. For graduation questions contact registrar@lagcc.cuny.edu; read receiving-college instructions concerning deposits, orientation, placement, financial aid, and enrollment.
- ❑ **Future planning** **Arrange for the final transcript.** Ask the receiving institution whether it needs a transcript after final grades or after the degree is posted. Order it through CUNYfirst according to the Registrar's instructions and confirm receipt in the transfer portal.
- ❑ **Japanese development** **Choose the next Japanese course carefully.** Contact the receiving institution's Japanese department before registration. Avoid unnecessary repetition as well as placement beyond your current ability, and share LaGuardia syllabi or work samples if the department needs additional information.
- ❑ **Future planning** **Complete your ePortfolio and exit reflection.** Select the strongest projects, explain what each demonstrates, and remove private information. For technical help contact eportfolio@lagcc.cuny.edu; reflect on how your abilities, interests, and goals changed during the program.
- ❑ **Community** **Maintain professional relationships.** Thank faculty, advisors, and classmates who supported you. Keep their contact information and share occasional concise updates about your progress.

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After Graduation

Keep learning, contribute, and plan the next stage.

- ❑ **Community** **Update the Japanese Option program.** Email Japanese Option director Tomonori Nagano at tnagano@lagcc.cuny.edu with where you transfer and whether you receive a scholarship, internship, or job. Alumni outcomes help faculty advise and encourage future students.
- ❑ **Community** **Join the alumni community.** Ask tnagano@lagcc.cuny.edu about current approved Japanese Option alumni networks and events. Alumni contacts can provide practical advice, encouragement, and professional connections.



Your next milestone

Write down one action you will complete this week, one person or office you will contact, and one deadline you need to confirm. Progress through the Japanese Option is built from small actions completed at the right time.

Links

- Japanese Option webpage: <https://t-nagano.com/projects/JapaneseProgram/> 
- Japanese Option Blog: <https://chrysanthemum.commons.gc.cuny.edu> 
- Japanese Option Discord: Contact tnagano@lagcc.cuny.edu for the invitation link 
- Tomonori Nagano, Faculty Advisor for the Japanese Option at LaGuardia
 - Office: B-234FF 
 - Phone: 718-482-5484 
 - Email: tnagano@lagcc.cuny.edu 