

Japan Studies Institute 2017

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Passport to Japan

I have been very inspired by the Japan Studies Institute 2017. I am especially fascinated with the different facets of the culture, history, language, art, politics, and more, that have been presented to us over these two weeks. At Armstrong, we have already done some work on Japan: we organized a Symposium on Japan with a talk from the Deputy Consul in Atlanta in March, we are the hosts of a yearly Asian Cultural Festival on our campus with Japan represented by vendors and artists (i.e. Taiku Drummers); and we have an Asian Studies Minor (with classes that emphasize Japan, such as HIST 3220: History of Japan, or POLS 3210: International Relations: East Asia.) However, there is often a disconnect between what the students learn in the classroom and the real world.

In the spirit of the Japan Studies Institute that gave us a glimpse of the different colors of Japan, which, when put together, formed a very interesting whole, the idea of my project is to give students and anyone who may be interested in this project, the tools to discover a taste of Japan, of the Japanese culture, so they end up wanting to learn more about it, minor in Asian studies, major in Japanese, go on a study abroad trip, or apply for the JET program, for example.

The Office of International Education at Armstrong will consequently coordinate with professors, community members, and more, to advertise what I have called "The Passport to Japan" Program. For this program, students will have to attend a total of 10 Japan-related programs throughout the academic year. They will put together a passport/portfolio in which they will use a picture of them at the event they attended accompanied with a reflection (2-3 paragraphs) of what they have learned at a particular event. Each Japan-related event attended is worth 100 points. If students reach 1000 points, their Passport will be analyzed and reviewed by a committee, and the winner will receive a \$500 scholarship to use on a study abroad trip to Japan!

The plan is to start advertising for this project even before the academic year starts. We will do so on our website, in the First Year Experience seminars, in the appropriate classes (political science, history, art, film, language, philosophy, nutrition and more...), as well as with flyers, social media, posters, emails and more. We will keep a log by month on our website of the available programs and add new ones as we find out about them. With this, we hope to trigger more interest in what we already offer, grow the program, and possibly create more.