



**To:** Dr. Yoshikiro Higurashi, Japan Studies Institute Director; Ms. Jill Gately, Program and Meetings Manager; and Andrew Olfato, AASCU Student Assistant Director  
**From:** Don Taylor  
**RE: Japan Studies Institute: A Summary of my Curriculum Plan for Inserting Japan into the Curriculum**

**What Objectives** Japan: A 3-Week Unit on Asian Communication Styles and Japanese Communication  
Upon completion of this 3-week unit on Japanese Communication Styles, the students of CST 229 Intercultural Communication will be able to:

1. Identify key differences between American communication and Japanese communication styles.
2. Recognize and speak key basic greetings of the Japanese language to build an initial relationship through shared language.
3. Recognize and Assimilate Japanese cultural norms in a social setting so as not to offend.
4. Understand the elements of aesthetic beauty of the Japanese culture and use it to create conversation and build relationship.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of basic Japanese art by listing films, anime, creative art forms.

**The Plan:**

Using the knowledge I have gained in the Japan Studies Institute, I plan to create a 3-week unit in my CST 229 Intercultural Communication class that will introduce and familiarize students with a survey of Japanese culture. The emphasis will be to give them an understanding of Japanese culture and basic knowledge for visiting Japan or for conducting business in Japan or with Japanese co-workers.

Most of my students have had little to no exposure to Japanese culture and find it to be quite intimidating. My *Intercultural Communication* class is designed to introduce students to a basic knowledge of cultures outside of the United States and help them to learn key communication differences that will allow basic understanding of that culture and encourage research of that culture that can demystify it and give them the courage to communicate and create relationships with people from other cultures as well as give them some basic tools to succeed in professional interactions.

Blue Ridge Community College students are generally lower middle class students with the Associates Degree possibly being their terminal degree. Rarely do they get the opportunity to learn about other cultures and this may be their only chance. However, most will get the opportunity to work with someone from Japan whether in the workplace or by technology as they will be working in industries like Daikin Applied, a Japanese air conditioning company based in the Harrisonburg area. Having trained in that company, I am confident that most of these workers do not understand Japanese culture or communication. This will be a tool enabling them toward intercultural and interpersonal improvement.

I have successfully included Hispanic, European, and African cultures and now plan to include Asian and, specifically, Japanese culture as a unit that will allow students to gain a greater understanding of both Asian and Japanese culture. The 3-week unit will include the following strategies to help the students to

not only become familiar with Japanese culture, but also have the tools to communicate and build relationship with a Japanese associate.

### **Elements of the 3-Week (6-Class) Unit in the CST 229 Introduction to Communication**

1. **15 minutes of Language training in each class** – Using the language training from the JSI, I plan to assimilate the exercises into each class. The language training at the JSI was a key component of demystifying Japanese culture as I was able to understand the similarities and differences of Japanese and English as well as understanding how the language was constructed.
2. **15 Minutes of Geo-Political instruction in each class** – Most of my students would not be able to point out Japan on the map or know the issues that are presented with an island nation. I will use this part of the lesson to create an interactive activity in each class to identify key geography, city locations, topographical challenges, and political issues that affect the Japanese lifestyle and would be helpful in communicating with Japanese counterparts.
3. **15 Minutes of Art and Aesthetics in each class** – Exposure to Japanese art will allow the students to compare and contrast Japanese and American art forms and allow students a foundation for understanding the Japanese aesthetic thus inhibiting surprise and prejudice when confronted with such different art forms as Japanese film, Anime, Manga, Tea Ceremony, Origami, Sumie, and Ikebana. One Japanese film will also be assigned outside of class with a film analysis paper to be created.
4. **30 Minute Student-Led Discussion of the content of each class** – I am a firm believer in allowing my students to use the tools they have been given and to talk about them. I create Socratic Seminars in which the students are graded on a student-led discussion. This discussion will happen each class based on topical readings given about each class's topic as well as the in-class interactive experience. Students will be graded on participation, discussion of the articles, use of terminology and concepts, personal application, and analysis of the day's activities.

### **Daily Schedule of Events:**

#### **Class 1:**

- Assigned Reading Japanese Language and Vocabulary, Geography, and video on Japanese art forms of Sumie
- Class Activity Language instruction and practice on Basic Greetings and Introductions
- Class Activity Technology Scavenger hunt about Japan and its geography on interactive classroom computers
- Class Activity Simulated Ikebani Activity with most technical creation awarded
- Discussion 30-Minute Student-Led Discussion of Readings and Class Activities

#### **Class 2:**

- Assigned Reading Japanese Language and Vocabulary, Politics, and Anime video
- Class Activity Language Instruction on Basic Greetings and Introductions
- Class Activity History Video and

- Discussion 30-Minute Student-Led Discussion of Readings and Class Activities

### **Class 3:**

#### Assigned Reading

- Class Activity Japanese Language and Vocabulary, Feminism in Japan, and Ikebana video
- Class Activity Language Instruction on Basic Greetings and Introductions and Hobbies
- Discussion Video on Sumie, then class given supplies and create Sumie with most technical awarded
- Discussion 30-Minute Student-Led Discussion of Readings and Class Activities

### **Class 4**

#### Assigned Reading

- Class Activity Japanese Language and Vocabulary, Buddhism and Shinto, and Music
- Class Activity Language Instruction on Basic Greetings and Introductions and Hobbies
- Class Activity Video on Classical Music of Japan to Buddhist music of Japan
- Discussion Meditation Lesson and Exercise
- Discussion 30-Minute Student-Led Discussion of Readings and Class Activities

### **Class 5**

#### Assigned Reading

- Class Activity Japanese Language and Vocabulary, Contemporary Politics
- Class Activity Language Instruction on Basic Business Greetings and Introductions
- Discussion Political Negotiation Simulation based on a crisis from the Political Reading
- Discussion 30-Minute Student-Led Discussion of Readings and Class Activities

### **Class 6**

#### Culmination Test

- Students will attend a business luncheon as different characters (boss, employee, co-worker, spouse, college intern) and only speak in Japanese. All will provide food and beverage for the after work party and will interact with each other obeying all social rules and be respectful of position. The test will last for 30 minutes and the instructor will observe and grade. Each student will have 5 pennies in hand and can use an English expression 5 times but must forfeit a penny for each expression until all pennies are gone. Once the pennies are gone, they must communicate only in Japanese the rest of the time.
- Discussion 30-Minute Student-Led Discussion of Readings and Class Activities