

## 2017 Japan Studies Institute

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### Project Proposal Summary

This two-week seminar has provided tremendous insight into the rich culture of Japan, both past and present. It has been particularly interesting to see how the varied disciplines presented are connected by a consistent Japanese philosophical worldview. I anticipate my experiences in the JSI program to directly impact two courses that I teach:

#### MUS 115 – *Experiencing Music*

This music appreciation course is part of the general education curriculum. The class focuses primarily on traditional elements Western art music, from medieval to contemporary time periods. Non-Western music is only briefly discussed.

I would like to develop a module within the course that will be devoted to the study of Japanese music. Students will draw parallels between traditional Japanese sacred and secular genres as compared to Western genres. The study may include music drawn from:

- Shinto / Buddhism
- Gagaku Orchestra* (Court Music)
- Biwagaku* (music of the *Biwa*)
- Shamisenongaku* (music of the *Shamisen*)
- Theatre Music: *Nohgaku, Kabuki and Bunraku*
- Sokyoku* (music of the *Koto*)
- Shakuhachi*
- Minyo* (folk songs)

In each instance, attention will be given to social context and purpose. A possible student project may involve having students compare and contrast the instruments, aesthetics and social context of the *Gagaku* orchestra with of those a Western orchestra. Similar contrasts may be drawn through comparisons of other Japanese and Western musical genres.

#### MUS 357 – *Brass Methods & Materials*

This class is intended to provide instrumental music education majors with exposure and pedagogical approaches to teaching brass instruments.

Japanese middle school and high school Western-style wind ensembles are highly regarded for their superior performance level, which often rivals American collegiate bands. Japanese bands are especially noted for their excellent tone production, intonation and attention to fundamentals.

I would like to craft an assignment that will have students compare and contrast Japanese and American teaching strategies and rehearsal techniques. Areas of study may include rehearsal regimen, structure of student hierarchy/leadership, warm-up techniques, use of vocalization and singing, use of technology (the Yamaha Harmony Director, in particular).

While some aspects of the Japanese approach may not be compatible in an American school setting, many elements may be successfully integrated. Students will explore ways to integrate the two systems.