



# Osaka, Japan

## Grace Watters

**Program:** Intensive Japanese Language - Summer 2019

**Major:** Film and Media Arts

### Earning the Language Immersion Badge:



I attended six weeks of intensive Japanese language in Osaka, Japan during this most recent summer earning eight credits towards my Bachelor of Arts, language requirement and a potential Japanese Major. Learning abroad pulled me out

into the open ocean of knowledge and the restriction of fluency in only a single language. The constant language change was isolated for the first weeks, and all of my thoughts were stuck in my head without an outlet. American culture revolves heavily around our language usage of primarily English to

express all of our needs, wants and desires. Through this unintentional idealism of language superiority, we're unknowingly limiting ourselves as a culture because we don't take the time to adjust to other's language preferences. Through practicing the Japanese language in everyday settings, I realized that this language isn't a translation of English but, its own words entirely. After several weeks, I finally gained a better grip on the language. I wasn't fluent by any means, but even my body language changed to be more expressive as I craved to connect with others in any way possible. This insight will guide me through improving my basic communication academically, professionally and socially. I've had my eyes open to an overseas perspective I would not have gained otherwise as study abroad allowed me the opportunity to travel while gaining knowledge. Simply vacationing would not enable me to actively learn through immersion in Japan and have such a unique experience.

### Transferable Skills:



Through undergoing cultural immersion, my perspective has expanded and empathizing with others has become easier especially in social and professional situations. My confidence in situations that otherwise would have been uncomfortable are now opportunities for growth, which I can take with me through career and life opportunities. From conversing with the cashier in a konbini to answering a question my professor posed in Japanese, I've been pushed to slow down and think about my words preventing me from otherwise being overwhelmed. The Japanese lessons in Osaka advanced my Japanese through first-hand conversational experience and full immersion, where otherwise I would be sitting in a classroom listening to lectures for fifty minutes a day hoping to pick up the language.

**"Learning abroad pushed my comfort zone beyond what I thought was possible and helped me just begin to learn my potential. Traveling abroad has helped me see beyond the scope of the United States and reflect upon our nation's global intersection."**

