

Faculty of Letters

AKADEMIA stands for Art, Knowledge AnD English Major for the International Arena and is the English Medium Programme (EMP) in the Faculty of Letters, Department of Humanities. The Department of Humanities provides a wide range of courses taught both in English and Japanese, but under the AKADEMIA students can graduate by studying solely in English, or by a combination of courses taught in English and Japanese. In this way, Japanese students will be able to experience the study abroad environment while studying in Japan, while overseas students will be able to take a degree programme in Japan using English as the medium of instruction.

The Department of Humanities offers courses in Sociology, Anthropology, Philosophy, History, Social Linguistics, Languages, Translation Studies, Literary Studies and Peace Studies, and Buddhist Studies. It provides the opportunity for students to undertake a truly inter-disciplinary approach to social studies in the humanities. This includes sociological and anthropological courses with a focus on Japan in a global context, courses in comparative cultures and minorities, philosophy, Buddhist studies, and history, literary studies and textual analyses, languages, social linguistics, and translation studies, communication studies which include personal, intercultural and global communication courses, as well as more theoretical courses in general sociology and anthropology, cultural representation and literary and translation theory.

Under AKADEMIA three Majors are currently on offer:

[Global Japan Studies \(Sociology/Anthropology\)](#), [Literary Studies \(with a focus on Fantasy literature\)](#), and Cross-Cultural Communication. Majors are specialised courses that begin in Year 3. While the student continues to take a variety of courses throughout their third and fourth years, they will also choose a Major. This gives students the opportunity to work closely with one teacher who specialise in a certain field and work with a smaller group of fellow students. This will eventually lead to writing up a final dissertation. Under the Major system the student participates in a weekly seminar group consisting typically of between 8-12 students which will continue in Year 3 and Year 4. Thus, the seminars span the last two years until graduation, and facilitates the development of more specialised knowledge. In the last year students focus on pursuing their own area of research interest and will acquire the knowledge and skills to undertake some of their own research on a chosen topic. This research will be part of their final graduation dissertation.

Japanese students wanting to take the degree programme under AKADEMIA are required to have a TOEIC score of minimum 550 and/or have at least level 2 of the English Proficiency Test. International students from English speaking countries/or with proficiency to study in English at academic level and who do not speak Japanese will be required to take basic Japanese courses in their first year. The focus here in on learning basic and conversational Japanese. Students can choose to continue studying Japanese to an advanced level in subsequent years. Any courses taught in Japanese is also available to international students given they have proficient language ability. Other major language courses that can also be taken in the department are Chinese, Spanish, Korean, Russian, French, German and others, as well some ancient languages. The EMP programme spans across the university faculties and it is possible for students to take some courses from other departments in for example Economics, Politics, Business, International Relations, Education, Law and Environmental studies.

The applications for AKADEMIA will officially begin in your second year. To apply, your GPA needs to be above 3.0. Also, in order to receive your diploma under AKADEMIA, you will need to have taken at least 24 credits of the below courses and achieve a GPA of above 3.0 to finish the program.

► [See details of Majors](#)

► [See courses offered](#)

Courses Offered

Introductory Courses [Courses for First Year Students]
Introduction to Humanities
Global Japan Studies : Understanding Japanese Society
Introduction to Philosophy
Basic Courses [Courses for First or Second Year Students]
Human and Society : Japanese Culture and Society
Literature 1
Peace Studies 1
Cultural Representation 1
Comparative Culture 1: Cultural Diversity and Similarities
Comparative Culture 2: Globalisation and Nationalism
Interpersonal Communication
Philosophy 1 (Introduction to Contemporary Philosophy: Knowledge, Reality and Value)
History 1
Introduction to Linguistics
Sociology 1 (Intellectual Foundations of the Social Sciences)
Advanced Courses [Courses for Upper Year]
Sociology 2 (History of Sociology and Contemporary Issues)
Intercultural Communication
Global Communication
Philosophy 2 (Introduction to Eastern Philosophy: Nichiren and Contemporary Philosophical Issues)
Literature 2
History 2
Peace Studies 2
Cultural Representation 2
English in Society
English in Institutions
Translation Studies
Text Studies 1 & 2
Special Lecture A & B
Peace Studies Workshop I & II
Human and Society 2: Diversity and Marginality in Japan

MAJORS: In addition to these courses, all students in the Faculty of Letters participate in seminar groups led by faculty staff, and submit Final Thesis in their final year.

- Research for Graduation Thesis

Courses that teaches skills in Academic writing are also recommended.

- Academic Writing A I-II
- Academic Writing B I-II
- Oral Communication in English I-II
- Academic Foundations for Humanities

Anne Mette Fisker-Nielsen

Major in Global Japan Studies Major (Sociology/Anthropology) combines:

1) anthropological insights rooted in first-hand research that focus on the subtleties of micro-level interactions and qualitative research that combines an investigation into conceptual frameworks of peoples' worldviews; and 2) broader sociological research findings and historical studies to situate issues within a broader context. In this way, the student will develop a capacity for undertaking an erudite analysis of our contemporary world by linking micro- and macro-levels and situating knowledge within its historical and contemporary, usually globalised context. With a focus on Japan, we study social and political issues including issues of identity and emotions, gender and performance, historical memory and geo-politics, migration and minorities, consumption and stratification, media and public discourse, political and religious movements, populism and identity politics. The student will acquire conceptual and analytical ability to undertake a comprehensive social investigation into contemporary social issues which are mostly very complex. Learning how to analyse social phenomena in an in-depth manner, the Major in Global Japan Studies looks specifically at Japanese society but in a global context and through a comparative framework. Analytical skills acquired are rooted in a social anthropological approach and can be applied across other social contexts as well. Students will be assessed through essays and class participation and presentations, and over the two years of weekly seminars they will acquire solid academic writing and public speaking skills. Significantly, student will acquire new creative ways of thinking through the complexities of our contemporary world.

Typical Requirements for taking the Major in Global Japan Studies are: 1) Completed Global Japan Studies (Understanding Japanese Society) and/or Human and Society (Japanese Culture and Society); 2) have completed Sociology 1 (Intellectual foundations of the social sciences). Students are recommended to take Comparative Culture 1: Cultural Diversity and Similarities and Comparative Culture 2: Globalisation and Nationalism; and Sociology 2 (History of Sociology and Contemporary Issues). Other recommended courses are Introduction to Philosophy, Introduction to Politics, and other Social Science course, Literary and History courses in either English or Japanese.

More details:

The Major in Global Japan Studies is also a major in sociology/anthropology with a particular focus on Japan and Japanese society. Issues are studied from within as well as considered from a broader global perspective that takes accounts of history while engaging with sociological and anthropological studies and theories. For the first two semesters (Year 3), we base our weekly seminars partly on selected chapters from Brian McVeigh's book *Interpreting Japan*, and partly on additional ethnographic material which will be given in class. We study in detail the re-evaluation of the anthropological/sociological debates about Japan in the light of contests over orientalism, problems of representation, and look closely at the reality of Japan as a multi-cultural and diverse society whose nation-state history is still passionately debated.

Based on foundations courses taken in Year 1 and Year 2, in Year 3 when the Major begins we consider in detail debates about "Japan" and "Japanese culture" and how this relates to the formation of and continuous re-creation of the nation-state project. We consider the rise of modern Japan, how what becomes constituted as "secular" and "religious" becomes a central political ideology, and the workings of modern bureaucracy, mass media, and education to newfound concepts of citizenship and identity in pre- and postwar Japan. Underpinning the nation-state project is a re-imagining of Self and Other, a highly gendered project, that is under contemporary evaluation and change. We consider migration to and from Japan, and Japan as a global player in the international arena today.

We also study broader macro-level processes against theories about everyday embodiment, norms and ritualised conduct that link the macro- and the micro levels, and how "normal" behaviour is often the crucial arena of change. We look at issues of identity, emotions, and historical memory through various social, economic and political practices and current initiatives within practices of consumption, migration, "othering" in politics, religious and civil society social engagement, and wider demographic and family changes. We also consider the mass and social media from the perspective of not merely reflecting reality but directly participate in constructing our framing of contemporary issues.

In term 3 and 4, we begin by looking at wider flows and processes of current nationalism and populist politics, and the student develop further their own specific research interest, learn to develop a research design, undertake appropriate research, and write up a graduation thesis based on that.

Selected reading list:

Graburn, et.al. (eds). 2010. Multiculturalism in the New Japan: Crossing the Boundaries Within. New York: Berghahn Books.
Hashimoto, Akiko 2015. The Long Defeat: Cultural Trauma, Memory and Identity, Orford: Oxford University Press
Mathews, Gordon and White, Bruce (eds.). 2004. Japan's Changing Generations: Are young people creating a new society? London: RoutledgeCurzon.
McVeigh, Brian J. 2014. Interpreting Japan. London & New York: Routledge.
Robertson, Jennifer (ed.). 2005. A Companion to the Anthropology of Japan. Oxford: Blackwell.
Sugimoto, Yoshio (ed.) 2009. The Cambridge Companion to Modern Japanese Culture. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Rausch, Anthony (2014) Japanese Journalism and the Japanese newspapers. Amherst, New York: Teneo//press.

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Bruce Carrick

Major in Fantasy Literature (Literary Studies)

In this Major, students will grow in their understanding of the whole genre of juvenile fantasy literature. Fantasy literature plays a significant role in contemporary human imaginings. Students will learn to discuss similarities and differences among the representative works. They will become familiar with at least one author, reading several books of that author; or one subgenre (e.g. quests, dragons etc., yokai, paranormal romance, urban fantasy, steam punk, dystopian, Ghibli vs Disney); or a literary device (e.g. gothicism, girls as protagonist, orphans, gateways, magic, superpowers). Past and present students have researched topics such as contemporary use of fairytales, gender, political systems and family/social structures in constructed fantasy worlds, the literary devices in Harry Potter stories and the process of conversion of written stories into cinema/anime storylines.

Courses in children's literature, fairy tales and mythology, Gothic literature; and finally European history of the middle ages, Chinese/Japanese literature, anime studies, Cultural Representation I and II, and psychology, especially course dealing with child/adolescent psychological/intellectual/moral development will be relevant. Applicants are required to demonstrate existing knowledge of fantasy literature through reading (any language), to see if they have sufficient prior reading experience upon which to build and with which we may construct comparisons with the literature they will read in the seminar classes. Successful candidates will be able to analyse and assess a book series or multiple similar books that they have read. All interaction and writing are in English but reading in one's native-language is permitted.

Students are recommended to take the following courses:

Basic: Comparative Culture 1: Cultural Diversity and Similarities and Comparative Culture 2: Globalisation and Nationalism.

Advanced: Sociology 2: History of Sociology and Contemporary Issues.

General Education: Introduction to Philosophy, Introduction to Politics.

Teacher profile (make link to website profile maybe under name above?):

Anne Mette Fisker-Nielsen, PhD (Social Anthropology, SOAS, University of London). Anne Mette's (first name) research focuses on Japanese politics, political cultures, political engagement and social movements, as well as Japanese religion and popular culture. She has also had a long-standing interest in Social Theory (Intellectual History) and Theory in Anthropology and Sociology, and Comparative Cultures. She has undertaken long-term first-hand research on various topics in Japanese politics, particularly in relation to the political party Komeito. Her current research focuses on issues related to politics and emotions, debates about security, Japanese pacifism and trust in politics, and debates within so-called Critical Religion that looks at conceptualisation of the 'secular' and the 'religious' in state-formation in a Japanese context.

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