

Jordyn Murtaugh
Personal Statement

Japanese culture has always had an influence on my life. Growing up my family used to take annual trips to the San Francisco Japanese Tea Garden every summer. I found my introduction to Japanese culture to be fascinating as it seemed I had transported to a secret garden in another world. I remember walking around the gardens marveling at the architecture of the small pagodas and design of the garden to be beautiful and unique, since then I have strived to learn more about Japan.

During high school I was lucky enough to take a Japanese language course. My initial reason for taking Japanese was a push from my brother and older cousins who took Spanish in high school. As I spent more time in the class I found a new interest in the language aspect of Japan. I became intrigued about the different writing systems and obtained a better understanding of the Japanese culture. Because of this experience I knew I wanted to continue my learning of Japanese language and culture in college at California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB).

While at CSUMB, not only have I improved upon my Japanese language skills through various language and grammar courses, but also through my interactions with Japanese students who have come to America to study abroad. I have also had the amazing opportunity to study abroad in Okayama, Japan. It was a true immersive experience where I developed my speaking and listening skills within the classroom and outside. I have also taken courses on the Japanese American experience during the late 1800s through the early 2000s, a broad history of Japan, social issues in Japan, and several other historic and cultural courses. The course on social issues in Japan has taught me the changing perspectives of renewable energy due to the 2011 tsunami and nuclear power plant, the different practices of women in the workforce stemming from the cultural background. These courses have also taught me to be open minded and understanding of other cultures, as well as understand the nuance of culture within language. My time at CSUMB has led me to be more globally competent so that I may thrive within the world.

I wish to use the knowledge that I gained during my time at CSUMB in my future career. Once graduating I want to apply to the Japanese Exchange Teaching Program (JET). Through this experience I hope to instill in Japanese students the same interest and understanding in another culture as well as continue to explore the unique culture. Upon completion of the JET program, I hope to continue my education in localization and translation and enter the Middlebury Institute of International Studies in Monterey.