

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A JAPANESE STUDIES PROGRAM AT FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY*

Steven Heine
Florida International University

Overview of the Development of Japanese Studies in Florida

Less than ten years ago, Florida International University (FIU) in Miami – one of ten public universities in the state of Florida system of higher education and ranked number one in the country in serving Hispanics – offered only a short list of basic Japanese language courses taught by a part-time instructor and very few area studies courses. Now, FIU's Institute for Asian Studies (IAS) offers at least six language classes per semester by two full-time instructors and adjuncts with nearly 300 students attending each academic year, plus a strengthened study abroad program. There are also a number of courses regularly offered in various disciplines, including religion, history, international relations, and political science, including an innovative and popular course on Zen and the Art of Tea Ceremony. Japanese studies, which includes creative elements in research and publication projects, conferences, outreach activities, cultural events, study abroad initiatives, student clubs, and the like, has become a significantly well-rounded program that forms the core of the recently implemented Asian Studies B.A. (2002) and M.A. (2005) programs.

Based in large part on a combination of grants from the U.S. Department of Education, The Japan Foundation and other private funding agencies, IAS has supplemented curriculum in Japanese studies through the recruitment of specialized faculty and the creation of new courses. Japanese language and area studies at FIU has grown into a substantial program that is one of the leaders not only in the state university system, but in the Southeast region of the U.S. By working with other institutions in Florida, ranging from the University of Florida, Florida Atlantic University, and Miami-Dade College to community organizations, such as the Office of the Japanese Consul-General in Miami, the prestigious Morikami Museum and

*Note: This was originally presented at the 2005 annual meeting of the Japanese Studies Association of Brazil held at the University of Brasilia. Other panelists included representatives from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, France, Mexico, and Russia.

Japanese Gardens, the Southeast US-Japan Trade Association, and the Association of Florida Teachers of Japanese, IAS has helped build a network of Japan-related education and outreach associations. Known as *JapaNet*, this has been recognized by the Japanese Foreign Ministry for promoting friendship and exchanges between countries. During the past year, the Japan Foundation selected FIU on two occasions to sponsor a language pedagogy workshop in summer 2005 and to support a panel on the state of Japanese Studies in the Southern U.S. as part of the Southern Japan Seminar meeting held in March 2006.

In the late 1990s, some faculty at FIU were skeptical about whether a Japanese studies program would ever be able to develop successfully in Miami, often called the “capital” of Latin America with its focus on the southern hemisphere. There was a chicken-or-egg issue of how to get started. If the courses were not well enrolled, how could we be confident about the extent of student interest? At the same time, how would it be possible that student demand be mobilized and demonstrated if the curriculum was not available and if interested students were not sure that beginning the study of Japanese would pay off in completing two or three years of coursework along with related educational opportunities. The Institute for Asian Studies, then a fledgling interdisciplinary program, took a “build it and they will come” approach that has proven to be a great success, in large part through the support of higher administration, including President Modesto “Mitch” Maidique and then Provost Mark B. Rosenberg, currently Chancellor of the Board of Governors of the state system.

By taking small, incremental steps at program building and through gradually increasing the course offerings in language and area studies, a strong level of student support was grown and maintained. Currently, momentum is increasing on different fronts. Academic programs including the major, minor, masters, and Japanese Studies certificate enroll over 250 students at undergraduate and graduate levels, and research components include the publication of this annual peer-reviewed journal. Study abroad initiatives have resulted in successful intensive summer language programs housed at partner institutions Ritsumeikan University and Aichi Prefectural University, attracting students from throughout the state university system, in addition to semester exchanges with Ritsumeikan, Kansai Gaidai, and Kanda University of International Studies.

IAS EXTERNAL FUNDING

Department of Education

Asian Studies Initiative (1997-2000), \$160,000

Asian Globalization and Latin America (1999-2002), \$160,000

South Florida Consortium for Asian Arts and Culture (2001-2005),
\$365,000

Japan Foundation

Library Support Program-Category A2 (2002), \$5,000

Japan-Language Teaching Material Donation Program (2002, 2003),
\$1,000

Training Program for Teachers of the Japanese Language (2003), \$5,000

Support Program for Japanese-Language Courses Abroad-
Salary Assistance (2003), \$71,000

Center for Global Partnership - Grass Roots Educational/Public
Outreach Program (2004-2007), \$60,000

Miscellaneous Grants for Pedagogy and Teaching Resources (2001-2006),
\$25,000

National Endowment for the Humanities

Development of Asian Languages (2006-2008), \$75,000

Fu Foundation

Scholarships for Students Traveling to Asia (2001-2006), \$18,000

Outreach has become a major focus through a Center for Global Partnership-funded professional development project for training teachers selected from K-12 schools throughout South Florida to infuse Japanese studies materials in their classrooms. The teachers participate in workshops featuring FIU faculty and a variety of national and international speakers. A wide variety of cultural events both on and off campus have included a lecture by Ambassador Ryozo Kato in May 2005 and the recent performance of a composition for Taiko and Flamenco created especially for IAS by then Dean of the School of Music and renowned composer, Fredrick Kaufman. The performance of “Kaminarimon” was applauded by the *Miami Herald* in 2002 as “one of the most creative artistic events of the year,” and has been expanded and revised for additional performances at venues around the country.

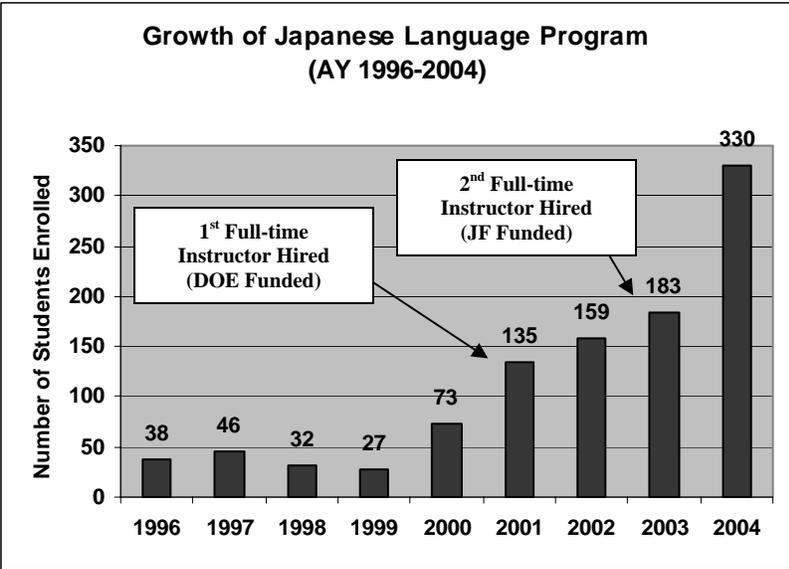
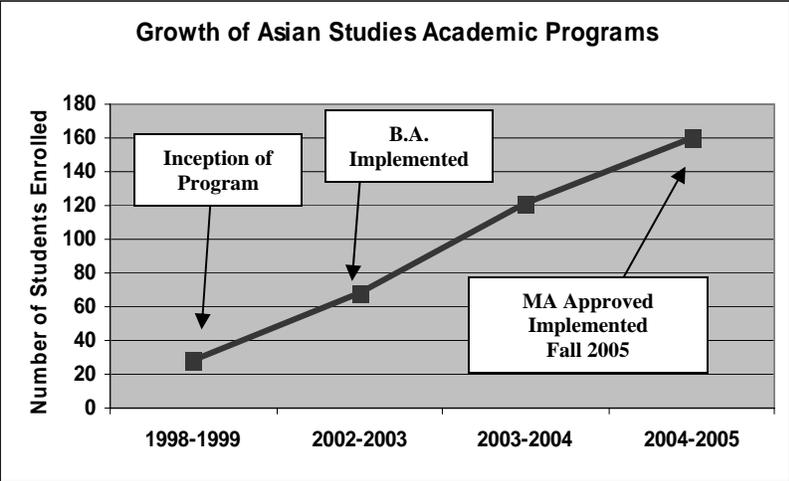
In the past couple of years, a new form of skepticism has arisen with regards to Japan’s decline in the world scene, while interest in China and other Asian countries is coming on strong. While the Institute for Asian

Studies is eager to see and accommodate the development of demand for Chinese studies and Asian studies more broadly conceived, we note that national trends show that there remains a longstanding and sustained interest in Japanese society and culture, with Japanese language enrollments holding their own. In some studies, Japanese is listed as the language with the third highest enrollments in American colleges (following Spanish and French, especially since demand for other European languages such as German and Portuguese has been diminishing, although it is the case that Chinese studies has been increasing). Our conviction is that Japanese studies is not a passing fad because the impact of Japan remains strong and pervasive, as can be seen by the ongoing popularity in the West of the “3N’s”: Nintendo, Ninjas, and aNime.

Growth of Japanese Language Enrollments and Asian Studies Academic Programs

IAS offers a variety of undergraduate and graduate academic programs. On the undergraduate level there is a B.A., a minor, and several certificate programs, including a certificate in Japanese Studies. At the graduate level, there is a certificate and a newly approved M.A. Because of the strength of our Japanese studies program, nearly 90 percent of Asian Studies majors are currently concentrating in Japanese. An important development was the approval of the major as a “stand-alone” program, although many students pursue a second major in international relations or international business.

Other developments that have enabled the programs to grow include: 1) strong student clubs, including the Anything Goes Anime Club, said to be the largest student organization on campus that sponsors conferences every summer with over a thousand attendees, the Asian Student Union, which produces cultural events in the student center, and several specialty clubs for martial arts; 2) new acquisitions of Japanese vernacular reference materials for the library; and 3) continuous upgrade of the language lab and internet learning resources. The first table below shows the steady growth of IAS academic programs, and the second table demonstrates how the language enrollments have been steadily increasing with the implementation of full-time instructors supported by external funding.



The Asian Globalization and Latin America Project (AGLA) is an innovative new trans-regional program, which originated at Florida International University partly through funding support from a U.S. Department of Education Title VI grant. This program brings together two major area studies programs at FIU, the prestigious Latin American and Caribbean Center, which has long been designated a National Resource Center, and the rapidly growing Institute for Asian Studies. The project focuses on links or points of intersection between the regions of Asia and Latin America by examining issues such as migration, identity, trade, education, and technology, with an emphasis on contemporary society as part of a comprehensive investigation of the significance of globalization affecting all regions.

Because this program remains unique, every month we receive messages from people around the country and the world who are eager to learn or participate in our project, and comment on how innovative it is. Similar projects emphasizing research have been undertaken at the University of California at San Diego and at Stanford University, and there may be initiatives at other universities as well. However, the FIU project seems to be the only one with a significant curriculum component including an ongoing certificate program that offers students a credential, making them competitive for graduate school or the workforce.

The following is a list of some of the main speakers who have contributed to the project:

Japanese Brazilian Migrants in Japan (Joshua Roth, Mt. Holyoke College)

Japanese Brazilian Identity and Japanese Immigrants, Other Minorities and Ethnic Identity in Brazil (Jeffrey Lesser, Emory University)

Kaminarimon: Taiko and Flamenco Performance
(Fred Kaufman and Karen Fuller, Florida International University, School of Music)

The Shakuhachi and Japanese Subcultures in South America (Dale Olsen, Florida State University)

Japanese Butoh Dance (Christine Grenier)

Butoh Dance Demonstration (Helena Thevenot)

Japanese Dance Traditions in Brazil (Susana Yamauchi, Japanese Brazilian dancer/choreographer)

Asian Cults in Brazil (Ronan Pereira, University of Brasilia's Center of Asian Studies)

Zen Buddhism in Brazil (Cristina Rocha, University of Western Sydney)

Nikkeijin in Japan (Natali Garcia-Diaz, FIU Student)

In addition, several lectures have stressed the role of Chinese in Cuba, including:

The People's Republic of China in Latin America: Economics or Strategic Maneuvering?

(Speakers and Discussants: Ralph S. Clem, FIU; Bud Cole, National Defense University; Dave Finkelstein, Center for Naval Intelligence; Linda Robinson, Harvard University; Jack Sweeney, Strategic Forecasting; Cynthia Watson, National Defense University)

Chinese Ethnic Communities in Cuba (Kathleen Lopez, University of Michigan)

Asian Languages in the United States (Yu-Lan Lin, Boston Public Schools)

The table below is a partial list of some of the new and infused interdisciplinary courses featuring the Asia-Latin America connection in cultural studies such as migration and diaspora or political economy including trade and commerce.

New and Infused Courses	
Department	Course Title
International Relations	Asia and Latin America in World Affairs
International Relations	International Relations of Developing and Third World Countries
Modern Languages	Asian & Latin Heritage Languages in North America
Modern Languages	Japanese Culture and Calligraphy
Modern Languages	Asia in 19th Century Hispanic Literature
Modern Languages	Eastern Thought & Latin American Literature
Religious Studies	Sacred Space, Sacred Travels
Religious Studies	Asian Religions in the Americas
Sociology/Anthropology	Labor Movements in Developing Countries
Sociology/Anthropology	Globalization and Society
Theater/Dance	World Perspectives in Dance

The Consortium Approach in Florida

In addition to collaborating with Title VI centers at FIU, including the Latin America and Caribbean Center, the Center for Transnational and Comparative Studies, and the Center for International Business Education and Research, Asian Studies has grown by working with other universities in Florida. With the Asian Studies Program at the University of Florida (UF) in Gainesville, we have formed the Florida East Asia Consortium, a dynamic network for organizing events and coordinating outreach efforts, such as a conference on Japanese films and a symposium on the theoretical writings of Natsume Soseki featuring an international group of scholars. UF is the flagship school in the state system and has an outstanding program in Asian languages and literatures supported in part by Freeman Foundation funding and producing over 50 Japanese majors per year. More locally, we have established the South Florida Consortium for Asian Arts and Culture involving Florida Atlantic University and Miami-Dade College, as well as

the Morikami Museum. Furthermore, we work closely with the Florida-Japan Linkage Institute housed at the University of West Florida, which has hosted two Florida-Japan Summit conferences, and other faculty statewide, particularly John Maraldo of the University of North Florida.

Study Abroad

IAS encourages study abroad opportunities for students to Japan, including semester or year-long exchange with Ritsumeikan University, Kanda University of International Studies, and Kansai Gaidai University. In summer 2005, we offered a new intensive language program in collaboration with Aichi Prefectural University (APU). The group of 15 students spent six weeks at the APU campus located outside Nagoya and took team-taught courses in Japanese language and culture as well as economics, history, and international relations. They also had the opportunity to visit Kyoto and Tokyo, and to experience directly the Japanese lifestyle through weekend homestays. This program, the first of its kind in the state system and successful in recruiting students from other universities in Florida, has been expanded to include Ritsumeikan. In addition, IAS has been gradually increasing the number of JET participants, having sent a dozen graduates in the past three years – the second highest number among universities in the state system.

Japan-Related Events

IAS sponsors activities with local businesses, colleges, schools, and other institutions to promote an awareness of Asian and Asian-American culture. Sponsored by IAS, the Southern Japan Seminar held March 3-4, 2006 in Coral Gables included a panel on linguistics organized by Stan Dubinsky (University of South Carolina), and featured lectures by Ann Wehmeyer (University of Florida) and Mark Ravina (Emory University) on the state of the Japanese studies field in the southern region. The Seminar held its third spring meeting at the Wolfsonian-FIU Museum on South Beach on February 25-26, 2005. It included a keynote presentation by Jeffrey Lesser (Emory University), *The Pacific Rim in the Atlantic World: Imagining Brazil's Japanese*, on the meaning of being Japanese and the role of the Japanese in Brazil. Following were two panels. One was on modernization, featuring John Mertz (North Carolina State University) and Martha Chaiklan (Milwaukee Public Museum). The other panel focused on women and society, and included discussions by Jan Bardsley and Hiroko Hirakawa (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), and Kinko Ito

(University of Arkansas). The Seminar meeting ended with a roundtable discussion on global affairs in the post-Perry era. The Seminar will hold its next meeting on Japanese Business on November 17-18, 2006.

In collaboration with the Consulate General of Japan in Miami, FIU was proud to host Japanese Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the United States, Ryozo Kato, who spoke about US-Japan Relations, in addition to several other “hot topics” on May 10, 2005. In his speech, the Ambassador also discussed Japan’s presence in Iraq, the situation in Korea, and future relations with China.

Between June 26-July 2, 2005 FIU had the privilege of hosting a state-wide professional development workshop for Japanese instructors held by The Japan Foundation Los Angeles Office. FIU instructors Asuka Haraguchi and Hiromi Tanis helped coordinate and also participated in the program. As Vice President of the Association for Florida Teachers of Japanese (AFTJ), Haraguchi also works closely with K-12 teachers in the state to develop standardized curriculum.

Research and Publications

IAS in conjunction with the Southern Japan Seminar publishes an annual peer-reviewed journal, *Japan Studies Review*, edited by Steven Heine, which involves interdisciplinary studies of modern Japan. The current volume (Vol. X, 2006) includes articles on Tokugawa era poetry theorist Kagami Shikō, the recent boom in the use of subtitles in Japanese television, the local importance of laquerware in the Tsugaru region, and the Korean television program “Winter Sonata” and its relation to Japan. Also appearing are featured essays, including one that provides a detailed view of Japanese studies and another dealing with the Japanese view of Nikkeijin. Past issues have included articles on the Japanese in Latin America and the Caribbean such as:

1. *Japanese Religions and Religious Diversity in Brazil* (Vol. III, 1999) by Ronan Pereira.
2. *The Appropriation of Zen Buddhism in Brazil* (Vol. IV, 2000) by Cristina Rocha.
3. *Circle K Recipes and Circle K Rules* (Vol. V, 2001) by Karen Tei Yamashita.

4. *Transcultural Possessions in/of Mahikari: Religious Syncretism in Martinique* (Vol. VI, 2002) by Erin Weston.

5. *Foreign Workers in Japan: A Look at Japanese Cultural Perspectives Regarding Nikkeijin* (Vol. X, 2006) by Natali Garcia-Diaz.

In the past few years Steven Heine, director of IAS, has presented lectures at the University of London School of Oriental and African Studies, Cambridge, Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Columbia, Pennsylvania, Hawaii, Pennsylvania, UCLA, Emory, Florida, and Florida Atlantic, in addition to the University of Tokyo and Komazawa University. Among his recent publications are *White Collar Zen: Using Zen Principles to Overcome Obstacles and Achieve Your Career Goals* (Oxford University Press, 2005), an edited book with Dale S. Wright, *Zen Classics: Formative Texts in the History of Zen Buddhism* (Oxford University Press, 2006), and an article, "Zen in the Workplace: Applying Anti-Structure to Enhance Structure," in *Global Business Language* 9 (2004), pp. 95-106.

Laura Nenzi, assistant professor of History and IAS assistant director for Asian area studies, has published articles in prestigious journals including *Monumenta Nipponica* and *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*. Also, her manuscript entitled *Intersections: The Place of Recreational Travel in Edo Culture and Society*, was accepted by the University of Hawaii Press and is forthcoming. Nenzi has presented papers at the national meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, and the International Conference of the European Association of Japanese Studies. This past year, she also presented lectures at Harvard University and Oxford University.

Paul Kowert, associate professor of International Relations and IAS Graduate Director, has received support from the Social Science Research Council and the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science for his continuing research on the causes and limits of national identity in US-Japan relations for which he has been conducting research in Kyoto and Aichi prefecture. Kowert also teaches a highly successful course on U.S.-Japan relations, and recently created a new graduate course entitled "New Asian Century."

Asuka Haraguchi, instructor of Japanese and IAS Assistant Director for Asian languages, won the Japanese Ambassador Cup, a prestigious national award in Shotokan karate, and was selected to be a member of the U.S. national team. She has also been elected to serve as the

vice president of the Association of Florida Teachers of Japanese, including organizing the annual Japan Bowl and speech contests for K-16 students. Haraguchi has received several Japan Foundation awards for pedagogy and teaching materials.

Bongkil Chung, Professor of Philosophy, teaches Buddhist thought and the philosophical traditions of China and Japan, and is an expert on Korean Buddhism. Chung has published a major translation of the Korean Won Buddhist school teachings published by the University of Hawaii Press. Eric Messersmith, full-time lecturer of Asian Studies, teaches several courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, such as Zen and Tea Ceremony, International Relations of East Asia, Politics of the Far East, and History of Japan. In addition to his regular teaching load, Messersmith recently developed a new, innovative online course on the cultures of Asia. This course will be offered on a regular basis and will be available to students at FIU and other schools. He also helps to organize cultural events such as tea and martial arts demonstrations. Messersmith serves as the faculty advisor for the very popular Shorinji Kempo student club.

In addition, there is faculty strength in FIU professional schools, especially the Colleges of Business and Law, which is planning to develop a study abroad trip to Japan. Faculty at other institutions in South Florida, including Florida Atlantic University, University of Miami, and Miami-Dade College, along with the very active Association of Florida Teachers of Japanese, provide a base for research and teaching initiatives, as well as for outreach programs.

***JapaNet*: South Florida's Center for Studies of Japan in the Global Environment**

A major component of *JapaNet* is a professional development project for certified K-12 teachers and other participants in South Florida funded by the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership (2004-2007), as well as a network of Japan related organizations in South Florida. The project is an ideal introduction to Japanese culture, history, and society that demonstrates to teachers how to infuse Japanese materials into their classrooms. In addition to these topics, the project develops the following three themes:

a) Japan-U.S. Relations in the Post-Perry Era: Building on the 2003-04 celebrations of the arrival of Perry and opening of Japan-U.S. relations taking place in Miami, this theme examines developments in public affairs

and political theory, including contemporary trade and economic issues with an emphasis on pre- and post-war eras.

b) Japanese Migrations to the Americas and National Identity: In connection with the centennial anniversary of the settlement of the Yamato Japanese colony in South Florida that was commemorated by the Morikami Museum in 2005, *JapaNet* will examine Japanese diaspora in North America and Latin America, with an emphasis on Brazil, Peru and representative smaller settlements in the Caribbean, including returnees to Japan.

c) Global Exchange in the Post-Bubble Era: The final theme focuses on the overall impact on Japan and Japanese heritage communities in light of globalization trends, including trade policies and regulation, socialization and assimilation, and expressions of ethnic identity.

By the end of the grant cycle, the project will produce a permanent record of teaching resources, including sample lesson plans created by project participants that will be disseminated throughout the region and nationwide. During the first two years of the project, teachers representing over three dozen schools in South Florida have submitted 60 lesson plans on topics including the Minamata disease, human rights abuses against women and children, the arrival of Commodore Perry's "Black Ships," and *Tako* (Japanese kites).

One of the many highlights was the involvement of two science professors, Joerg Reinhold (associate professor of physics) and Gene Rosenberg (associate chairman of biology), who have both traveled and researched extensively in Japan. During the second year of the project they presented a lecture on scientific investigation in comparative contexts. *JapaNet* also includes a diverse list of cultural activities sponsored both on and off campus through a network of associations, especially with the Morikami Museum, the Office of the Consul-General of Japan in Miami, and the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership.

Student Essay

