

John Webster Personal Statement

My name is John Webster and I am a Japanese Language and Culture major at California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB). I'm applying to study abroad in Japan at Toyo University's Hakusan campus. I became interested in Japan's culture and language because of my interest in anime and manga that started in high school. I remember my first time being introduced to anime, it was lunch period and my friend brought me to a classroom that had a few other students and they were all watching an anime called Outlaw Star. The version they had was the original Japanese voices with English subtitles. I watched and read a lot of anime and manga starting from that day. My original major in college was engineering, but some of the universities I planned to apply for had a requirement of 2 semesters of a foreign language. Because of my interest in anime and manga over the years I decided I wanted to take Japanese.

I have been studying Japanese at the college level for 6 semesters and have a cumulative GPA of 2.5. Before I transferred to CSUMB I studied Japanese at San Joaquin Delta College (SJDC) and after completing 4 semesters there became a teacher's assistant for the Japanese language class for 3 semesters. The experience I had during that time was my inspiration to change my major to Japanese language and culture and I want to become a Japanese language teacher. During my time at SJDC I was also involved with the Japan club for 4 semesters, 2 of which I was the club president. At CSUMB I have just recently joined the Japan club starting this semester.

Studying abroad in Japan will be the best way for me to bring my knowledge of the Japanese language and culture to the next level. I want to take courses in Japan that will improve and enforce my reading comprehension, writing, speaking and listening skills. I also want to learn more about kanji while I am in Japan. I have gone over the selection of courses at Toyo University with my academic advisor at CSUMB and have a selection of courses that would benefit me both in my learning of Japanese and my progress to graduating. Using the knowledge and skills I obtain from my experience in Japan and from CSUMB, I want to join the JET program to both spend more time in Japan and to gain experience teaching. Another career I would like to experience is translating Japanese media such as books, manga, anime, movies etc. for English speaking audiences. The work that people put into making the subtitles for the anime I watched when I was in high school was a large part of what made it possible for me to enjoy the anime when I had no knowledge of the Japanese language.

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