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Japanese Studies minor, JNHS inductee, winner of the U.S. State Department Critical Language Scholarship for Japanese Language 2013

2014 - B.S. NanoEngineering at UCSD

2017 - Master of Entertainment Arts & Engineering - University of Utah

Current - Production Intern at Sony PlayStation

When I entered UCSD, I had already been studying Japanese for 3 years. A trip to Tokyo in 2009 elevated my passion for Japanese language and culture to new heights but also taught me that I still had a long way to go toward fluency. Thus, one of my goals for college was to continue studying Japanese language. I was very fortunate that UCSD had a fantastic Japanese Studies program.

Not only were the faculty excellent instructors, but they were compassionate as well. As an Engineering major, my course load was filled with classes that were taught in-sequence and only once per year. I had many schedule conflicts between my Engineering and Japanese language courses that ultimately would have forced me to discontinue my formal study of Japanese had it not been for the flexibility and compassion of my Japanese professors.

The Japanese Studies department was so accommodating that I started looking into other classes the department had to offer. Originally, I only intended on taking Japanese language courses, but my professors' genuine interest in my personal and academic success motivated me to pursue a minor in Japanese Studies. My foray into Japanese Sociology, Political Science, Art History, and J-pop were actually some of the most enjoyable and informative classes I took at UCSD.

Professionally, Japanese fluency has definitely given me an edge. Because Japan is a massive player in the game industry, knowing Japanese has allowed me to expand my professional network and offer greater value to employers.

If you are wondering if the Japanese Studies department is right for you or whether it's worth pursuing a degree in Japanese Studies, my advice to you is to try taking a course that seems interesting and see where it takes you. There are a myriad of courses to choose from, and you will not find another department at UCSD that cares more for the success of its students than the Japanese Studies department. When I look back at my time at UCSD, some of my fondest memories are those of my growth and achievement in my study of Japanese language and culture, and the friendships I made along the way.