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I wanted to spend my time learning something I enjoyed regardless of whether it might or might not become a career for me. At that time, I was very much into anime, Manga, and video games.

My time studying abroad in Japan was most enjoyable. It was challenging but rewarding.

My favorite classes were the language classes and the Japanese business class. Instead of purely textbook based classes, many of the assignments and activities were very practical and engaging.

There are many ways to learn the Japanese Language and Japanese culture and while I cannot vouch for other methods, my learning experience in the Japanese studies program complemented by my study abroad has helped equipped me with the necessary mindset to navigate the Japanese political and cultural environment.

There are many facets in Japanese Studies whether it's cultural, political, economical, linguistics, etc. Regardless of which focus you decide to pursue, the knowledge you learn inside the classroom can only be a complement to actual experiences outside of it. You would also gain more out of each class by actively searching for those kinds of experiences and getting out of your comfort zone.

Whether study abroad is an option or not, there are many local and college organizations that are a great resource to not only learn new knowledge and apply old knowledge, it's a great way to connect with like-minded people. These people will or have had similar experiences such as everyone on this panel, that will help guide and answer many of the concerns and questions you have.