

Sophie Osborn

B.A. in International Studies-History, Minor in Japanese Studies

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As a child I spent four years in Japan due to my dad's job in Tokyo, and I learned to speak Japanese fluently. Over the years I lost my language abilities, and I wanted to build them back up in college. I also wanted to deepen my knowledge of Japanese history and culture, to better understand the country that had been an integral part of my childhood.

I greatly enjoyed advancing in language courses and seeing familiar teachers and classmates again each year. It was also very rewarding to gradually be able to tie in some of my other course work into my language classes, and start to be able to talk about Japanese politics in my senior year.

When I first started college, learning Japanese was more of a personal goal. However by the end of college I had developed an interest in political science and international relations, and my Japanese Studies minor as well as my time studying abroad in Tokyo helped me land my first jobs out of college. I moved to Washington DC originally for an internship at the Japan Chair at the think tank the Center for Strategic and International Studies. After that, I was hired as a Researcher at the Japanese Embassy in DC. I can confidently say that without my Japanese Studies minor, I would have never known that I was interested in or would have been able to pursue those positions. In those positions, I was able to use my Japanese language and reading skills, and knowledge of etiquette and spoken honorifics definitely came in handy!