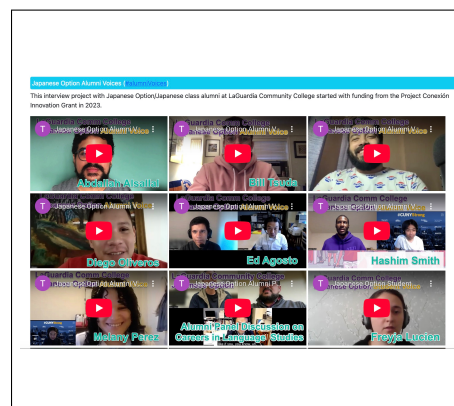




The Liberal Arts: Japanese Option (AA) at LaGuardia offers a structured pathway in Japanese language and Japan Studies, preparing students to transfer into East Asian/Japan Studies bachelor's programs. The curriculum centers on the four levels of the Japanese language courses and Japanese literature in translation, alongside humanities and social science electives related to Asia. Clear transfer pathways include articulation with Queens College (BA in East Asian Studies), Hunter College (BA in Japanese), and Temple University in Japan, giving graduates well-defined next steps after LaGuardia.

ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS

- **Abdallah Allasalal** began Japanese at LaGuardia in Spring 2013 and completed the Japanese Option in 2015. He transferred to Queens College (BA) and then to the CUNY Graduate Center for his master's degree. He currently teaches Japanese and Arabic at LaGuardia.
- **Bill Tsuda** earned the U.S. Department of State's Critical Language Scholarship and a fellowship from the Henry Luce Foundation. He presented his Japan study-abroad experience to U.S. Ambassador Caroline Kennedy in 2015.
- **Nhia Borja** graduated in 2018 and started working as a Japanese language tutor while she completed her BA and MA. She currently teaches Japanese at LaGuardia.
- **Edward "Ed" Agosto** graduated in 2018 and returned as a language tutor after earning his BA in 2022. He is currently in Japan as a JET instructor.
- **Arin Soukoule** graduated in 2018 and received her BA from the CUNY BA Program. She is currently a graduate student at Kyushu University on Japan's MEXT scholarship.
- **Jeanne H. Michael**, a Japanese language instructor, received the Japan Foundation's language training fellowship in Urawa in 2012. She presented her demo lesson to First Lady Akie Abe when she visited LaGuardia in 2013.



The alumni-voice videos: <https://t-nagano.com/projects/JapaneseProgram/#alumniVoices>

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- **Established by 2014:** The Japanese Option was established in 2014 with support from the Japan Foundation's Salary Assistance Program.
- **Housed in ELA:** The option is offered through the Education and Language Acquisition Department (B-234), which sponsors the Japanese program and related language offerings.
- **Program aim:** Provides Japanese language plus Japan/East Asia content to prepare for transfer to East Asian or Japan Studies BA programs.
- **Core coursework:** ELJ101-104 (Elementary Japanese & Intermediate Japanese I & II) and ELJ 250 (Japanese Literature in Translation) anchor the program core, complemented by LIB200 as capstone.
- **Related language study:** Students also take one Chinese or Korean course based on placement, strengthening regional literacy and transfer readiness.
- **Advising and degree planning:** The degree map and advising model emphasize steady progress and timely completion in four semesters.

ENROLLMENT AND GRADUATION SNAPSHOT

- From Fall 2013 to Fall 2017, students who declared the Japanese Option as their major rose from 9 to 34, reflecting growing student interest in Japan-focused study at LaGuardia. The number of students now average between 20-25 students.
- New degree-seeking entrants in the option reached 14 in Fall 2019, marking an uptick in first-time students choosing Japanese as their specialization. The new degree-seeking students slightly declined after the pandemic, on average, about 10 students every year.
- Degrees awarded (five-year trend): 8 (2018-19), 2 (2019-20), 3 (2020-21), 7 (2021-22), and 4 (2022-23) AA degrees in Japanese Studies were conferred, indicating steady annual completions.
- Transfer destinations: LaGuardia graduates frequently continue within CUNY – Queens and Hunter are among the most common transfer destinations – providing strong options for Japan/East Asia study beyond the AA. A few students transferred to Temple University in Japan.

CONTACT INFORMATION

- **Program Director:** Tomonori Nagano (tnagano@lagcc.cuny.edu / 718-482-5484 / B-234 / sabbatical in 2025-2026) & Kyoko Mary Toyama (kyokot@lagcc.cuny.edu / 718-482-5276 / B236A / 2025-2026)
- **Link to the program website:** <https://t-nagano.com>
- **Link to the program blog:** <https://chrysanthemum.commons.gc.cuny.edu>