

School of Letters

Educational Objectives

In line with the Educational Objectives of Osaka University and maintaining the spirit of its precursor, the Kaitokudo academy, which was open to society with an emphasis on academic freedom and creativity, the School of Letters aims to educate students focusing on the hallmark the humanities and the demands of today's society as outlined below. The purpose of the humanities is to study human activities related to both spiritual and material culture, both Japanese and foreign, by: (1) exploring how such activities have changed from the past to the present through broad-based comparative analysis; (2) considering the essence and principle of these activities; and (3) delving into their intrinsic nature. Against the backdrop of the drastic changes in today's society, demands are growing for an interdisciplinary and comprehensive approach to address various social issues. In this light, the School of Letters has set forth the following educational objectives to promote studies across a comprehensive range of disciplines in the humanities – philosophy, language, history, literature and art.

Advanced specialized knowledge and outstanding academic expertise

Systematically nurturing advanced specialized knowledge and outstanding academic expertise in the humanities.

Broad-based knowledge and deep critical thinking

Fostering broad-based knowledge and deep critical thinking across academic disciplines in general and information literacy skills required in the information age.

International mindset

Developing a sharp sensitivity towards and deep understanding of different peoples and cultures.

Developing the ability to use Japanese language professionally, and the proficiency in the international common language, English, and other foreign languages relevant to one's specialty.

Design prowess

Cultivating the ability to improve oneself, explore the world, and identify & solve problems that face today's society.

Individual educational objectives

Developing the ability to play a leading role in the international arena by leveraging the knowledge and skills stated above.

Degree Awarding Policy (Diploma Policy)

Under the Diploma Policy of Osaka University, the School of Letters confers a Bachelor's Degree in Arts on individuals, subject to achieving the following objectives.

Advanced specialized knowledge and outstanding academic expertise

Acquiring specialized knowledge, and investigation and research methods and skills in a systematic manner.

Developing the ability to discuss investigation and research results and to state one's insights logically in both Japanese and English.

Broad-based knowledge and deep critical thinking

Acquiring broad-based knowledge and deep critical thinking across academic disciplines in general.

Acquiring comprehensive and broad-based knowledge and deep critical thinking in the humanities, covering a wide range of events.

International mindset

Developing a sharp sensitivity towards and a deep understanding of different peoples and cultures.

Developing the ability to use Japanese language professionally, and the proficiency in more than one foreign language .

Design prowess

Developing a deep understanding of the intrinsic nature of human spiritual and cultural activities and the ability to define and understand the significance of social and cultural changes from a macroscopic perspective.

Cultivating the ability to identify emerging social and academic problems and devise approaches to solutions leveraging the abilities stated above.

Individual learning goals

Developing the ability to write a bachelor's thesis with originality based on advanced specialized knowledge and outstanding academic expertise, broad-based knowledge and deep critical thinking, an international mindset, and design prowess.

In line with the Curriculum Policy of Osaka University, the School of Letters designs its curriculum pursuant to the policies stated below.

Principles of Curriculum Design

The School of Letters designs its four-year curriculum focusing on three areas of education – Academic Major education, Liberal Arts education, and Global Literacy education – with the aim of helping students to develop: advanced specialized knowledge and outstanding academic expertise in the humanities; broad-based knowledge and deep critical thinking; an international mindset backed by high-level foreign language proficiency and cross-cultural understanding; and design prowess to gain insights in social and cultural issues from a macroscopic perspective and devise solutions to various problems that face today’s society.

Academic Major education: Students are guided to acquire general knowledge and basic academic skills across disciplines in the humanities by studying “General Orientation to the School of Letters,” a required subject taught in the first year. In the second and subsequent years, students study Academic Major education subjects in their respective fields of specialization to systematically acquire specialized knowledge. In the fourth year, students are guided by their instructors to develop the ability to establish research topics on their own, conceive and implement research plans, and discuss and express their ideas professionally by combining broad-based and specialized knowledge in the humanities, with the ultimate goal of writing a bachelor’s thesis.

Liberal Arts education: Students are guided to acquire general knowledge in a wide range of disciplines and in basic information literacy skills by studying general education subjects in the first year. In the second and subsequent years, students study advanced Liberal Arts education subjects to gain advanced broad-based knowledge and deep critical thinking in disciplines other than the humanities and in interdisciplinary fields.

Global Literacy education: Students are guided to develop and enhance proficiency in more than one foreign language by studying Global Literacy education subjects in the first and second years, and develop a sensitivity towards and understanding of different cultures and peoples by studying Foreign Language subjects and advanced Global Literacy education subjects in the second and subsequent years. Students are also encouraged to study abroad under a partnership agreement or other arrangements with foreign universities, or to participate in overseas internship programs or international exchange events to further improve their proficiency and knowledge stated above.

Contents and Methods of Education

Lecture-based subjects are designed to help students acquire systematic knowledge in relevant topics. Students are also given writing assignments to develop the ability to collect, analyze and study relevant data on their own and compile and describe the results of their studies appropriately and logically. Seminar-based subjects require students to give an oral presentation individually to develop the ability to comprehend and analyze literature written in Japanese and foreign languages, conduct investigation and research appropriately, and present the results of such investigation and research in a logical and convincing manner. The School of Letters places importance on seminar-based subjects. Students must earn at least 20 credits in seminar-based subjects during the second and subsequent years for graduation.

Academic Major education: Students are guided to acquire a wide range of knowledge across disciplines in the humanities by studying subjects offered in an omnibus-style course, “General Orientation to the School of Letters,” taught by instructors in 20 different specialties in turn. This subject is essential for students to decide which field of study to major in. Students also select Academic Major education subjects that consist of lecture-based and seminar-based subjects. In some areas of specialties, practical-training-based subjects involving off-campus training or fieldwork are offered. Students are guided to develop the ability to explore and present their individual themes of study on their own in the process of writing a bachelor’s thesis.

Liberal Arts education: In the first year, students study: “A Door to Academia,” a small-group seminar-based subject; lecture-based basic Liberal Arts education subjects; and lecture- and e-learning-based informatics education subjects. Students select advanced Liberal Arts education subjects offered by the School of Letters and other schools as lecture-based or seminar-based subjects in and after the fall term in the second year.

Global Literacy education: Students study Global Literacy education subjects in the first and second years, and Foreign Language subjects in the second and subsequent years. These subjects focus on the study of foreign languages and are taught in a small-group setting. Positive class participation is required. The English language subjects are also taught by e-learning. Students select advanced Global Literacy education subjects, which are mainly lecture-based, in and after the fall term in the second year.

Academic Performance Evaluation Method

The academic performance of students in lecture-based, seminar-based and practical-training-based subjects is evaluated by assessing the level of achievement of learning goals specified in the syllabus based on examinations, assignments and reports.

All bachelor’s theses submitted are comprehensively reviewed and evaluated considering the adequacy of the theme, the clarity of discussion, the appropriateness of the method used to examine the data and literature, and the originality of the idea.