TUJ BRIDGE PROGRAM

Handbook for the Temple University Japan

Undergraduate Bridge Program

For Use by Admitted Students & Instructors

Last Edited August 2022

The purpose of this handbook is to help admitted students and instructors understand the goals of the Bridge Program. All TUJ undergraduates should also read and understand the official TUJ Student Handbook. If you have ideas for additional information or sections that are not in this edition, please contact Dr. Shawn Higgins at shawn.higgins@tuj.temple.edu

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Key Term Glossary

These are important key terms used in this document (and in American academic contexts). Most definitions are adapted from the Oxford Learner's Dictionary.

Accuracy – being exact or correct; doing something with skill without mistakes
Admitted – somebody/something allowed to become a member of a school
Analysis – the detailed study of something to understand more about it
Assessment – a carefully reached opinion or judgment about somebody/something
Assumption – a belief or feeling that something is true although there is no proof
Context (1) – the situation something happens in and that helps you understand it
Context (2) – the words that come before and after a statement that help you
        understand that statement's meaning
Curiosity – a strong desire to know about something
Curriculum – the subjects that are included in a course of study
Engagement – being involved with and trying to understand something
Ethical – connected with beliefs about what is morally right and wrong
General Education (Gen Ed) – the required curriculum for all undergraduate students
Holistic – considering a whole thing, not treating it as separate parts
Independence – the freedom to organize your life, make decisions, and more without
        needing help from other people
Initiative – the ability to decide and do something without waiting for someone to tell
        you what to do
Labor – work, both physical and mental
Matriculation – the act of officially becoming a student at a university
Perspective (1) – an attitude toward something or way of thinking about something
Perspective (2) – the ability to think about something in a reasonable way without
        making it seem worse or more important than it really is
Philosophy – a set of beliefs or an attitude to life that guides actions & behavior
Plagiarism – taking another person's ideas and pretending they are yours
Outcomes – the result or effect of an action or event
Reflection – careful thought about something, sometimes over a long time period
Synthesizing – combining separate ideas, beliefs, or styles
Transfer – taking information/skills/ideas from previous learning and using it in new
        courses or situations
Transforming – completely changing in appearance, especially so that it is better
Undergraduate – a university or college student studying for their first degree

Program Description and Philosophy

The Bridge Program is part of TUJ's Undergraduate Program and is for non-native English language learners who need to develop advanced academic language skills. In the Bridge Program, students take both credit-bearing and non-credit-bearing courses, all of which help students learn the essential skills needed to succeed in an American university. After completing the program, Bridge students become fully matriculated undergraduate students within the Temple University system. Bridge students can earn up to 15 credits toward their undergraduate degrees before matriculating. The Bridge Program can also sponsor visas for non-Japanese students. Visa-sponsored Bridge students are expected to complete the Bridge Program within one year.

The philosophical model for success in the Bridge Program is based on labor, effort, and engagement. To be successful, students should:

1. Attend EVERY class possible. When impossible, contact instructors as soon as possible to explain and ask about makeup assignment opportunities.
2. Complete and submit EVERY assignment, done in the proper way.
3. Do ALL extra assignments or resubmissions requested by instructors.

To improve, you must take risks, try new things, and listen to advice. Don't be afraid to make mistakes during class or on assignments. Just make sure you learn from those mistakes.

Levels and Courses

There are three Bridge Program levels. Each level takes one semester to complete. Students are placed into a level after the Academic Coordinator considers their standardized testing score (TOEFL, IELTS, PTE, or DUOLINGO) and their score on our own placement test. Students cannot choose their own level.

- Bridge 1 (Entry Level) [17 hours per week, **4 credits total**]
  - ➢ TUJBP0100 – Speaking Lab (Non-credit, 3 hours)
  - ➢ TUJBP0101 – Grammar Lab (Non-credit, 3 hours)
  - ➢ TUJBP0102 – Reading Lab (Non-credit, 3 hours)
  - ➢ TUJBP0401 – Academic Writing for New Students (Non-credit, 4 hours)
  - ➢ **TUJ1001 – Bridge Seminar I (1 credit, 1 hour)**
  - ➢ **Undergraduate Introductory Course (1 credit, 1 hour)**
  - ➢ **Undergraduate Introductory Course (2 credits, 2 hours)**
- Bridge 2 (Mid-Level) [16 hours per week, **5 credits total**]
  - ➢ TUJBP0200 – Speaking Lab (Non-credit, 2 hours)
  - ➢ TUJBP0201 – Grammar Lab (Non-credit, 2 hours)
  - ➢ TUJBP0202 – Reading Lab (Non-credit, 2 hours)
  - ➢ TUJBP0203 – Small-Group Tutorial (Non-credit, 1 hour)
  - ➢ TUJBP0402 - Academic Writing for Returning Students (Non-credit, 4 hours)
  - ➢ **TUJ1002 – Bridge Seminar II (2 credits, 2 hours)**
  - ➢ **UNVS1003 – Academic Bridge (3 credits, 3 hours)**
- Bridge 3 (Pre-Matriculation Level) [15 hours per week, **6 credits total**]
  - ➢ TUJBP0300 – Speaking Lab (Non-credit, 1 hour)
  - ➢ TUJBP0301 – Grammar Lab (Non-credit, 1 hour)
  - ➢ TUJBP0302 – Reading Lab (Non-credit, 1 hour)
  - ➢ TUJBP0303 – Research Tutorial (Non-credit, 2 hours)
  - ➢ TUJBP0402 - Academic Writing for Returning Students (Non-credit, 4 hours)
  - ➢ **Undergraduate General Education Course (3 credits, 3 hours)**
  - ➢ **Undergraduate General Education Course (3 credits, 3 hours)**

Program Course Descriptions

These courses are for Bridge Program students only. Course descriptions for all credit-bearing courses can be found on the Temple University Bulletin: https://bulletin.temple.edu/courses/

(0100/0200/0300) Speaking Lab - This course helps students improve the accuracy of their everyday and classroom English. Task-based and goal-oriented activities in a variety of college-life scenarios make up most of this course's material.

(0101/0201/0301) Grammar Lab - This course covers the grammatical vocabulary, tenses, and forms students need to express themselves and understand others in college writing. Students will work on their essay drafts written in Academic Writing as laboratory or studio pieces in this class.

(0102/0202/0302) Reading Lab - This course helps students develop critical thinking and effective reading skills for academic purposes. Reading Lab covers reading skills such as previewing, predicting, skimming, highlighting, annotating, summarizing, paraphrasing, and note-taking. Students will also learn strategies to understand new vocabulary and sentence structures in academic reading.

(0203) Small-Group Tutorial - This is a support course for Bridge Program students enrolled in UNVS1003. Students work in small groups with an instructor who helps students develop study and comprehension skills necessary to succeed not only in UNVS1003 but in all future undergraduate general education courses.

(0303) Research Tutorial - This is a research skills course for Bridge 3 students. Students will develop their own individual research projects, using the general research skills taught in class to complete their projects. Students also learn about academic dishonesty and plagiarism.

(0401) Academic Writing for New Students - This writing course is for students who are either new to the Bridge Program or new to American academic writing. In this course, there will be heavy attention paid to genre, form, audience, and tone. This course is not "easier" than TUJBP0402 (Academic Writing for Returning Students). Rather, it is meant to help students grasp the what, why, and how of academic writing at an American university.

(0402) Academic Writing for Returning Students - This writing course is for students who are either returning to the Bridge Program or who have experience writing American-style academic essays for college-level coursework. While we will briefly discuss genre, form, audience, and tone, the major focus of this course is on developing new, effective approaches to essay writing. This course is not "harder" than TUJBP0401 (Academic Writing for New Students). Rather, it is meant to help students already familiar with the basics of academic writing for American universities improve and expand their understanding and ability to write within the genre. NOTE: This course is NOT recommended for Bridge 1 students.

TUJ1001 Bridge Seminar I - This one-credit course introduces Bridge Program students to the opportunities and rigors of higher education, as well as to the skills needed to use academic resources successfully in college. This course is designed to help students make a successful transition to university life and learn to function as members of their academic community.

TUJ1002 Bridge Seminar II - This two-credit course introduces TUJ Bridge Program students to university-level research skills. Students will learn about the purpose and processes of academic research in different areas of study, and plan, develop, and complete an independent research project during the semester. This course aims to develop information literacy skills students need in General Education and major courses at an American university.
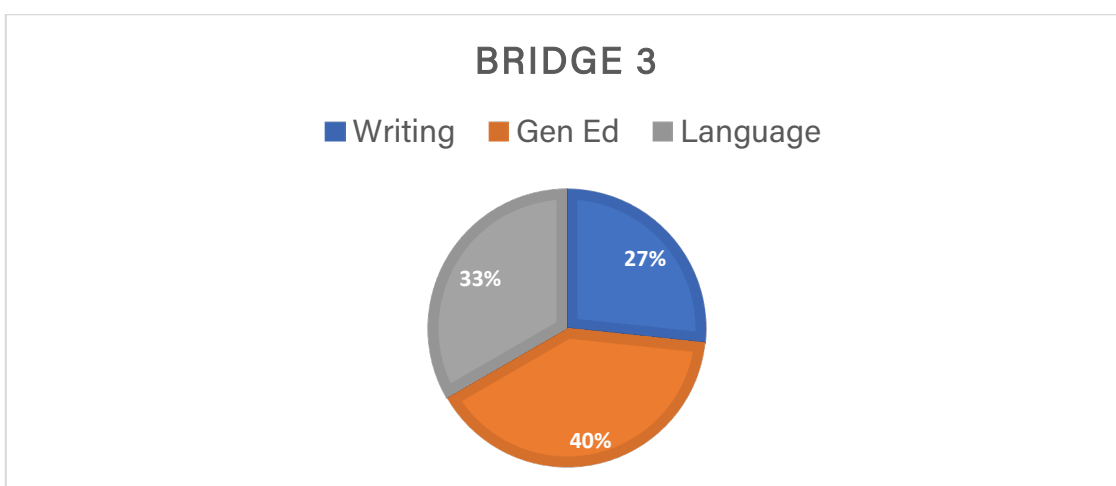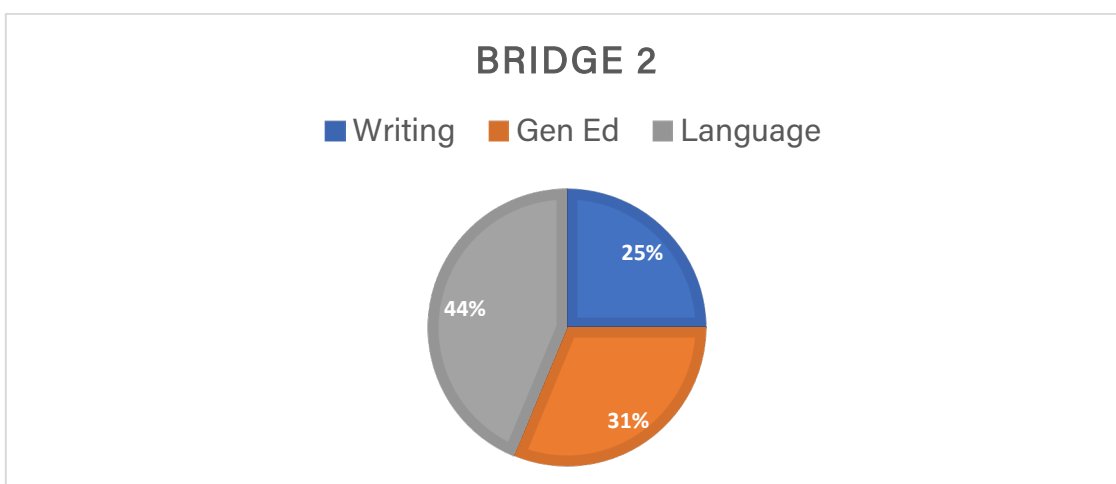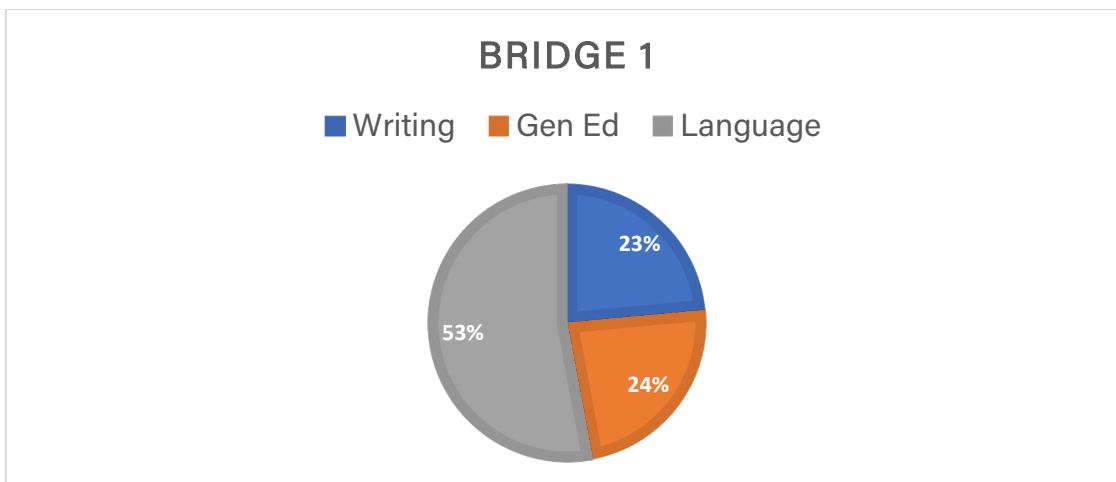
Learning Outcomes

The Bridge Program prepares students to be successful undergraduate students at Temple University Japan. In doing so, we help students build skills in the following areas:

Creative Thinking	Taking Risks	Connecting, Synthesizing, & Transforming		
Critical Thinking	Explanation of Issues	Influence of Context and Assumptions	Student's Position (Perspective & Thesis)	
Information Literacy	Determine the Extent of Information Needed	Access and Use Information Ethically and Legally	Evaluate Information and Its Sources Critically	
Lifelong Learning	Curiosity, Initiative, & Independence	Transfer	Reflection	
Oral Communication	Organization	Language	Delivery	
Reading	Comprehension	Relationship to Text & Reader's Voice	Analysis & Interpretation	
Teamwork	Contribute to Team Meetings	Facilitate the Contributions of Team Members	Foster Constructive Team Climate	
Written Communication	Context of and Purpose for Writing	Content Development	Genre Conventions	Control of Syntax & Mechanics

Curriculum Analysis

Here is a breakdown of the types of courses students take and their corresponding hours per week:

BRIDGE 1

■ Writing   ■ Gen Ed   ■ Language

23%
24%
53%

BRIDGE 2

■ Writing   ■ Gen Ed   ■ Language

25%
31%
44%

BRIDGE 3

■ Writing   ■ Gen Ed   ■ Language

27%
40%
33%

Grades and Assessment

There are no grades in the non-credit-bearing courses. Instead, Bridge Program instructors assess students' linguistic improvement through assignments, activities, and projects. In other words, students must demonstrate effort and record their labor through course work. During the semester, students receive ample feedback from instructors and then reply to and react to that feedback. At the end of the semester, students receive holistic assessment about their development, effort, and labor. The Academic Coordinator of the Bridge Program evaluates these assessments to determine if students are ready to move to the next level of the Bridge Program or into matriculation review. Students must demonstrate linguistic improvement to move higher in the program.

There are standard letter grades in the credit-bearing courses. These grades are also considered by the Academic Coordinator for reviewing student movement through the program.

Is it possible to "fail" a Bridge level and need to repeat it?	Is it possible to "skip" a Bridge level?
Yes, if you don't come to class, don't participate, don't submit your work in the correct manner, and/or don't make improvement in your English language skills.	Yes, if you're an outstanding student and you make significant improvement in your English language skills. However, this should be considered rare and not often offered to students.

Repeating a Bridge Level

Prior to 2022 Summer, the Bridge Program's policy was that, if a student fails a single course in their level's curriculum, they must repeat the entire level again next semester, including the courses they previously "passed." As of 2022 Summer, that policy has changed to a more holistic, labor and skill-based assessment of student readiness to advance to the next level.

For example, a Bridge 1 student receives "positive" assessments in every class except Reading Lab. The comments from their Reading Lab instructor read: "During the semester, you showed some skill in analyzing texts and identifying slanting and bias. In addition, you have occasionally shown an ability to meet the challenges of speed reading effectively. However, you only submitted half of the semester's work, and you missed class frequently. I believe you could have tried much harder to meet the minimum requirements of this course." **In this case, the student clearly did not feel completing the course was necessary since they had "some skill" in the subject area. The Academic Coordinator of the program would <u>most likely make this student repeat this Bridge level</u> because, while they demonstrate some skill, it is not clear they practiced and made improvement in all of the course material, meaning they may not be ready for the next level of Bridge.**

In another example, a Bridge 2 student receives "negative" assessments in 3 courses. The comments from these instructors all read similarly: This student came to class energized and prepared every day, submitted every assignment, and clearly tried their hardest to improve during the semester. However, their skills still don't seem to be improving quickly enough or fully enough. **In this case, the student still has one more semester to finish Bridge (Bridge 3). The Academic Coordinator of the program <u>might, after speaking with this serious and hard-working student, allow them to advance to Bridge 3</u> with an understanding and agreement that these skills need to be improved before matriculation.**

The previous policy was strict but clear. The new policy may seem less clear, but the hope is that we will encourage students to focus more on skill growth, risk taking, and developing a professional student-scholar attitude and lifestyle.

Matriculation (Fully Qualified Undergraduate)

To matriculate, Bridge Program students must complete the program by passing Bridge 3 or by being exempted through an assessment of the Academic Coordinator of the program. However, if a Bridge student obtains a new TOEFL, IELTS, PTE or DUOLINGO score while they are studying in the Bridge Program, they can submit it to the UG Admissions Office to be reevaluated. Official test scores must be received by the Admissions office ten (10) business days before If admitted by the Admissions Office, the student can matriculate without finishing the Bridge Program.

Leave of Absence (LOA) Policy

If a Bridge Program student needs to temporarily leave TUJ (not enroll in any courses for a semester), they must contact the Academic Coordinator of the program to notify them. There is no official LOA policy for non-matriculated students such as Bridge Program students. Therefore, there is no official document students need to submit. Instead, the Academic Coordinator of the Bridge Program needs to make note of your intended absence, and there needs to be an understanding about the student's expected return date. Language skills, if not practiced, will be lost over time. Therefore, if a student leaves TUJ for too long, there is a risk that their English skills will worsen, **and they may need to start Bridge again at the same level or a lower level than when they left. This is a rare but possible situation of which students must be aware before taking a leave of absence.**

Part-Time Policy

The Bridge Program is effective due to its immersive, intensive, and rigorous curriculum. Most students, therefore, are expected to take a full-time course load, meaning taking all the courses in a level simultaneously. Only students who have DRS accommodations will be allowed to take a part-time schedule. **Visa-sponsored students in the Bridge Program cannot take classes on a part-time schedule.**

Useful Links and Resources

General TUJ Links

TUportal (Easy Access to All Important Online Resources)

TUmail (Microsoft Outlook for TUJ Students)

Canvas (Learning Management Platform for all TUJ Courses)

Zoom (choose "Sign In with AccessNet" for your TUJ account)

Microsoft Office 365 (Temple University Licensed)

TUJ Academic Calendar

TUJ Counseling Services (available in English and Japanese)

TUJ Disability Resources & Services (DRS) (for permanent and temporary physical and mental disabilities. Students must register to receive accommodations)

TUJ Information Technology Services New Student Orientation

TUJ Student Code of Conduct

TUJ Teaching and Learning Center (free tutoring for students)

Bridge Program-Specific Links

Bridges: United States Academia for First-Generation and International College Students, by Shawn Higgins (Temple University Press, 2021)

> This is a free e-book educational resource I wrote to help Bridge Program students and other first-generation and international students around the world. Please read it and e-mail me if you have any questions.

Bridge Program Course Registration Website

> This is where students go to register for classes and to see their class schedules. Students do not pay tuition through this website; all billing is done through the TUJ Bursar's Office.