

# **Japanese Student Association ESC Club Recognition Request**

October 2012

## **What about the ESC interests you to become a club?**

My experiences with the ESC and its clubs left me contemplating my existence as a person of a minority group. Each person should feel comfortable with the community that they live in. Each minority group deserves to be represented and to have the resources to share its cultural capital with its community. I believe that is it our duty as the Japanese Student Association to help all the students who are interested in Japanese culture such as myself feel at home, away from home. Additionally, JSA is facing a financial problem due to the debt from last year and increase in total members this year. JSA is having bake sales at the beginning of the quarter, but it is still hard to make enough money to cover all the expenses for the weekly meetings and events. We hope to receive some financial support from ESC in order to hold more creative events and provide more useful resources to our members through such events.

## **Does your club represent a historically underrepresented population?**

There are only 20,000 Japanese-speakers living in Washington State and they are mostly located in the Greater Seattle and Bellevue area. However, it is not the same in Bellingham. Although there are Japanese students studying in Bellingham, Japanese culture is not well-represented. There is only one event that promotes Japanese culture at Western, Japan night hosted by AUAP, on campus, thus, our club is going to increase cultural awareness during the entire year through our club's events.

## **Does your club primarily serve students who feel marginalized on campus?**

Our club would cater towards those individuals interested in Japanese culture and those with heavy Japanese influence in their lives. We're interested in addressing issues occurring in Japan, increasing awareness of Japanese culture, and in general trying to disseminate Japanese customs and ideals throughout Western's campus.

## **Does the group/club promote educational/cultural awareness for their members? If so, how?**

As stated before, we wish to spread culture throughout Western's campus through demonstrations of the culture's foods, language, art, entertainment, holidays, formal attire, job opportunities, sports, and more as we think of them. During our weekly meetings, we will conduct a wide variety of activities to cover all sorts of Japanese cultural aspects such as making washi (Japanese paper) and giving martial arts demonstrations. Additionally, we will be helping Japan Night which is hosted by Asia University America Program (AUAP) to promote Japanese culture for Western students and Bellingham community. In order to raise educational awareness, we are planning on having a guest speaker from International Business, and also a Japanese Bilingual Information Session by collaborating with a company called TOP, Japanese Bilingual Job site. Through those events, we are going to promote educational and cultural awareness for our club members.

**How does your group/club distinguish between being an interest club and a cultural club?**

Our club does not focus on single aspects in Japanese culture such as Anime or Calligraphy. Through our club events, we will aim students to acquire a better understanding of Japanese culture, which includes some aspects of art, food, entertainment, and education. We will also provide information sessions for those who are willing to work in Japan or Japanese companies in the U.S. Thus, our club is open for everybody who is attracted in any aspects of Japanese culture and we hope to help them develop closer bonds with Japanese culture.

With such a large quantity of material to cover, saying that JSA is a "Japanese Interest Club" would be downplaying its past achievements. The club's leaders ran the Kizuna event last year, contributing over \$1400 in donations to the Tsunami relief fund last year.

**Are there any other offices/centers on campus that provide support for your club? If so, how?**

Japanese Conversation Club (JCC) and Asia University America Program (AUAP) may help us hosting some events. They won't be able to financially support JSA help JSA, but they can certainly help us raising awareness of JSA and creating creative events. We wish to invite other clubs associated with Japan to introduce our members to more specific aspects of the culture.