

2026 Enrollment AO Admissions (English Basis)

American University - Ritsumeikan University Joint Degree Program, College of International Relations

1. Number of Applicants, Successful Applicants, etc.

No. of applicants	No. of successful applicants in the first screening	No. of successful applicants
12	12	7

2. Target of this Admission Method

The American University - Ritsumeikan University Joint Degree Program aims to foster students who are able to appropriately understand a wide range of issues in global international society from a perspective of Global International Relations Studies and contribute to problem solving or peaceful and sustainable development. In addition, the admission method aims to recruit students who have an interest in those issues, who would like to study both in Japan and the U.S., and who are highly motivated to work with an international perspective in various fields such as government, economics, and culture in the future. In this JD Program, Ritsumeikan University's College of International Relations and American University's School of International Service jointly offer a single curriculum and bachelor's degree for the qualified students. The universities have constructed a sophisticated systematic curriculum which will offer students a new kind of international education, in order to achieve the common goal for talent development.

3. Content of Screening

(1) 1st Screening (document screening)

The application documents were reviewed holistically.

The topic of the essay was as follows:

Please describe a subject or field you wish to study within the Joint Degree Program, giving reasons why, and describing any connections this subject has to your previous experiences and activities. (within 600 words)

(2) 2nd Screening (interview)

An online interview was conducted.

4. Intent of Essay Topic, Interview Questions, etc.

(1) 1st Screening (document screening)

The intent of the essay above was as follows:

- 1) To determine if applicants truly have the desire to pursue the course of study in this major, as well as whether they understand the major's goals and curriculum.
- 2) To check if applicants have a high level of interest and a standard level of understanding regarding today's global society, especially the problems facing Asia and Pacific Rim nations.
- 3) To ascertain if applicants possess the basic academic skills to tackle the many problems facing our global society, the ability to think logically, and adequate English writing ability.

(2) 2nd Screening (interview)

The intent of the interview was to assess whether applicants 1) are competent enough in English (primarily conversation) to study at Ritsumeikan University and American University; 2) have the basic academic skills and communication ability to orally explain and discuss their essays in a logical manner; and 3) are capable of learning with other students in a multicultural environment while also possessing the ability to grasp multifaceted ideas concerning the many issues facing a global society.

5. Key Points of Evaluation

(1) 1st Screening (document screening)

In the document screening, the application documents submitted (English-language ability test scores, transcripts, and essays) were evaluated comprehensively. The English-language ability test scores and academic transcripts were used as the basis to evaluate the basic academic skills and English competency necessary for this major.

Also, the level of interest, knowledge, discussion ability, and problem-solving aptitude concerning International Relations, especially in Asian and Pacific Rim nations, were evaluated based on the essay content.

The essay was assessed primarily on whether the motivation for applying was clear and concrete and whether personal experiences were discussed in connection with the area of study at the University. In addition, it was evaluated based on how the applicants understood the problems facing today's global society, especially in Asia and the Pacific Rim nations, if that understanding was multilateral, and whether they were able to write logically in English.

(2) 2nd Screening (interview)

The seven main points evaluated in the interview were the following:

- 1) whether the motivation for applying was clear
- 2) if the applicant was competent enough in English to complete this specialized course of study
- 3) whether the applicant accurately understood the interviewers' questions and was able to logically discuss their opinion
- 4) whether the applicant possessed the basic academic skills necessary to study at the university level
- 5) if the applicant had the potential to become an effective player in our global society in the future
- 6) if the applicant appeared to be capable of splitting their learning experience between Japan and the U.S. in a multicultural environment and performing academically as part of this school's unique "learning community" with students from other backgrounds
- 7) if the applicant appeared to have the fortitude to accomplish the many tasks necessary to complete this program

6. Summary of Screening Results

(1) 1st Screening (document screening)

In the essay, most applicants were able to draw a connection between their own experiences and the issues facing our global society. Their thoughts and ideas were based on research, resulting in essays that presented multifaceted points of view.

(2) 2nd Screening (interview)

A commonality amongst most of the applicants was that they brought up the significance of learning together with other students in a multicultural environment and expressed a desire to participate in friendly competition with international students in both the U.S. and Japan. In addition, they understood the characteristics and goals of the Joint Degree Program and, based on their experiences, were able to convey their understanding of global issues, their goals for the future, and their visions.

Highly evaluated applicants demonstrated a strong understanding of international issues, as well as depth of knowledge and critical thinking skills, and clearly articulated their motivation for the Joint Degree Program. In contrast, some applicants did not fully develop their arguments beyond the content of their essays or did not sufficiently convey their motivation.

7. Advice for Next Year's Applicants

All subjects on your academic transcripts will be closely scrutinized. Therefore, please do not focus solely on your English language courses, but on all your subjects and day-to-day learning while maintaining your basic academic skills.

Additionally, follow the news via newspapers, television, and the internet, keeping abreast of international issues and giving thought to those topics. Today, most countries publish news in English, making it possible to stay up-to-date via smartphones and tablets. For matters that pique your interest, it is especially important to be aware not only of the news presented in your country but also how that news is being covered by the media in the relevant and related countries as well. This will enable you to gain a broader perspective of the issue.

Finally, visualize where you see yourself after graduation. This will help you determine what you need to study in the Joint Degree Program at Ritsumeikan University and American University, as well as gain a clearer picture of what role your studies within the College will play in the grand scheme of your life.