JPN 4930   Japanese Visual Culture   Syllabus

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Course Description

JPN 4930 is a survey of Japanese *manga* (comics) and *anime* (animation) from their beginnings in the middle of the 20th century to the present. Although manga and anime are enjoyed by an international audience, this course will explore them as a Japanese medium and critically examine how they interact with ideology and history in Japan. In addition to reading specific texts, students will develop the skills to analyze manga and anime, and conduct meaningful research on manga and anime. This class takes a literature/cultural studies approach, and therefore does not focus on sociological issues such as fan communities or issues of globalization and translation. All readings are in English; no knowledge of Japanese is required.

Required Textbooks

There are no physical textbooks. However, there are several required ebooks:

Key: [K]= Kindle book link [G]= Google book link

Tezuka, Osamu *Astro Boy Vol. 1&2* Dark Horse [K][G]
Tezuka, Osamu *Phoenix Vol. 1* VIZ Media [K][G]
Tezuka, Osamu *Phoenix Vol. 3* VIZ Media [K][G]
Tezuka, Osamu *Phoenix Vol. 7* VIZ Media [K][G]
Tezuka, Osamu *Phoenix Vol. 8* VIZ Media [K][G]
Kishimoto, Masashi *Naruto Vol. 1* VIZ Media [K][G]

All other readings will be posted on Canvas (e-Learning).

Class Policies

Absences

There will be <u>no makeups</u> for missed exams without a valid, documented excuse (e.g., a doctor's note, jury summons, etc.). You are allowed three unexcused absences without question. After that, each additional unexcused absence will result in a 1% drop in your final grade. An unexcused absence will, of course, result in a zero for your group work grade for that day.

Late Work

Essays are due at the assigned time and date. Late essays will be marked down 10% for every 24 hours late (i.e., if an essay is due at 10:59 P.M. on Monday, submissions between 11:00 P.M. Monday and 10:59 P.M. Tuesday will be marked down 10%, submissions between 11:00 P.M. Tuesday and 10:59 P.M. Wednesday will be marked down 20%, and so on).

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty, either in the form of cheating or plagiarism, will not be tolerated. Any proven instances may result in an automatic grade of "E" for the entire course and WILL result in referral to the Dean of Students Office.

Examine the UF honor code at https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/students/student-conduct-code/: particularly the following:

> On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:
>
> "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."
>
> VIOLATIONS OF THE STUDENT HONOR CODE.
>
> (a) Plagiarism. A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:
>
> 1. Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
>
> 2. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.

To avoid common issues remember: when in doubt, cite.

- Words taken verbatim from another source, whether a whole paragraph, a sentence, or part of a sentence, must be placed in quotes and cited. Changing a few words here and there does not make it your original work.
- If you take an idea from another source, you should acknowledge your borrowing in the text of the essay and provide a citation.

Accommodations

Students who need accommodations in class or on exams are warmly encouraged to contact the Dean of Students Office. See https://drc.dso.ufl.edu/ for more info. You are welcome to visit me during office hours to discuss your needs, but note that I need authorization from the DSO to make accommodations.

Technology Policy

This class is "tech friendly," but devices are expected to be used to read PDFs, take notes, or look up information. Non-class-related activities, <u>especially those that distract your classmates</u>, like texting, checking social media, or playing games will result in a zero for your class group work grade that day.

Grading

Grades will be calculated with the following weights. See below for descriptions:

Blog Project: 20%
Class Group Work: 15%
Discussion Leader Day: 10%
Exams: 30% (15% each)
Essay: 25%

Assignments

Blog Project

In this class you will create and maintain a Tumblr blog. The goal of the blog project is to give you a personal space to write informally about the class readings and viewings. This is like the reflection papers many classes use, except that you have ownership of your own writings collected on your blog, so you have a kind of journal of your thoughts as you go through the course. You can also see other students' posts and comment on them, and they can see and comment on yours.

You should publish a blog post every day *before* class, by midnight the night before, about that day's reading or viewing. Each post should be roughly two paragraphs long, and contain at least one relevant image.

Other than that, you are free to write what you want, as long as it deals with the day's assignment. This isn't formal writing, so you don't need to have a thesis or avoid first person or anything like that. Write in your own style about what you thought was interesting about the reading/viewing: what stood out to you, what you had questions about, random thoughts you had, whatever. The only stipulation is that it should be a *thoughtful* reflection on the day's assignment, not just a reaction. In other words, it's fine to write about your reaction to the text (you liked or disliked it, it made you happy or sad), but don't stop there: think about *why* you reacted that way. What feature of the text made you feel that way, and why? This will serve as a launching point for the class group work (see below).

This assignment is graded on completion. As long as you post something of a reasonable length that engages with the text thoughtfully somehow, and post it on time, you get 100%.

You must also post at least one thoughtful comment on a group member's blog post each day *before* class (at least one hour before) to get full credit.

Note that this is your own blog that belongs to you: you can keep using it after this class, and you can certainly post other things to it besides class stuff. Just make sure your classmates can find the class posts and that the material is appropriate for class!

Class Group Work

Every week you will be put into a group with 3-4 other students. About half of each class will involve working with these groups. *Before* class begins, you should read the blog posts of your other group members about the day's reading or viewing (you shouldn't be reading them in class!). As stated above, you must also post at least one thoughtful comment on a group member's blog post. During class, you will get together with your groupmates and discuss what you read in each other's blog posts. Discuss points of agreement or disagreement, and try to synthesize your ideas. You will also discuss your ideas with the discussion leader (see below). Groups will be reshuffled each week.

This assignment is assessed based on your degree of active participation in the group. If you come to class prepared by having read both the assigned material and your groupmates' blog posts, and actively contribute thoughtful ideas to the group discussion without getting sidetracked, you can get 100%. Obviously, if you are absent you will get a zero for the day.

Discussion Leader Day

You will have one day during the semester where you are the discussion leader. On this day, you must read *all* the blog posts (not just your groupmates'). There are three parts to this assignment:
- *Begin the discussion*: At the beginning of class, you will give a very brief mini-presentation, only 3-4 minutes, with no powerpoint. This is lightning-fast, so do not put in any book-report stuff (such as plot summary). You should include:
  - One or two of your own observations about the reading or viewing: maybe parts you found interesting, themes you discovered in the reading, etc.
  - Summarize the class's blog reactions: obviously you cannot (and should not) describe everyone's post, but look for one or two common topics that many people wrote about, or a lively debate that sprang up around one post. Give us the one-minute highlight reel.
  - Thinking about the above (that is, your own and your classmates' observations about the text), give us one good *discussion question.* This is a question about the day's reading or viewing that groups can talk about. It should not be a plot-level question or something that can be easily answered with Google (such as author biography). It should be a question about the text which cannot be easily answered, but discussion of which will help us think about the text (e.g., "Does

this reading have a nihilist message?" "Is this actually an apology for Japan's wartime past?" "Do you think the cute style disarms the reader so they accept the serious themes?" etc.). Groups should talk about this question in addition to their own blog reflections.

- *Monitor the discussion:* During group discussion, you will start out talking with your own group as usual, but then you will move around to other groups. You should spend a few minutes at each group, asking them what they are talking about, which parts of the text they are interested in, what they blogged about, what their response to the discussion question is, etc. You may not get to every group before I call time, but that's fine. You should take notes as you do this, which you will turn in at the end.

- *Wrap up the discussion:* After the group discussion, you will once again address the whole class and tell us what everyone was talking about. This should take no more than five minutes. You can tell us what each group was talking about individually, but also let us know if you found any common topics being discussed or conclusions being reached. It can be particularly interesting if two groups had completely opposite ideas or answers!

Essay

You must submit one essay, 8 pages, double-spaced, in 12-point type. This is a <u>persuasive</u> essay that presents a thesis about a text and defends it by citing evidence in the form of quotations from that text. At least three <u>scholarly secondary sources</u> are required. Scholarly sources are books from academic presses or articles from academic journals. Encyclopedias, newspapers, magazines, personal websites, and organizational websites are <u>not</u> scholarly sources. Neither are unpublished theses or papers, although exceptions are possible. You should cite other scholars *making an argument that supports your argument*, not random or well-known facts. Use Chicago citation format.

The goal of this paper is to give you a high degree of freedom to explore topics and works that interest you, using the knowledge and analytical skills you have learned in class. Therefore you can *pick your own work of manga or anime* that you wish to write about. You can choose to further examine one of the works we have gone over in class, or some other work of your own choosing. Keep in mind, however, that the main grading criteria are: a) is your thesis strong? and b) do you successfully persuade your reader of your thesis? You must prove a strong thesis that *analyzes* the text and uncovers something new about it. Keep that in mind as you think about what you want to write about.

If you are a major in LLC and want to turn this into your 10-page qualifying essay, please let me know.

Exams

There will be a midterm and a final exam, taken in class, closed book and closed notes. The final will be cumulative. The exams will test whether you have absorbed *lecture* content such as critical terms and textual themes. They will not test analytical ability.