

JPT3500 Introduction to Japanese Culture

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Primary General Education Designation: Humanities (H) ([Area objectives available here](#))

Secondary General Education Designation: International (N) ([Area objectives available here](#))

A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit. Courses intended to satisfy the general education requirement cannot be taken S-U.

Course Description

JPT 3500 is a broad introduction to Japanese culture. It includes a survey of both premodern and modern Japan, as well as an introduction to research methods and critical methodologies for studying Japan. **(H)** The course covers both the history of Japan and Japanese culture, as well as Japan's place in our contemporary, globalized, interconnected world. **(N)** The course covers secondary readings about Japan as well as a selection of important primary texts. In addition to learning specific historical/cultural knowledge, students will develop the skills to analyze and use primary source materials, evaluate secondary source materials, and conduct meaningful research on Japan. **(H)** The course also includes a critical examination of how knowledge about cultures is organized and how cultures are represented globally, and how this applies to knowledge about Japan. **(N)** All readings are in English, no knowledge of Japanese is required.

Class Motto

"Always historicize!"
(Frederic Jameson)

Textbooks and other materials

Required, but available online through the library:

Hane, Mikiso and Perez, Louis. 1991. [Premodern Japan: A Historical Survey](#). Second edition. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.

Sugimoto, Yoshio, ed. 2009. [The Cambridge Companion to Modern Japanese Culture](#). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Recommended: *Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, (Chicago Style for Students and Researchers)* 9th Edition, University of Chicago Press, 2018

Materials and Supplies Fees: n/a

Graded Work

Pop Quizzes (15%)

There will be short quizzes given in class on random days at irregular intervals. The quizzes will cover the assigned reading(s) for that day. You will not be required to memorize minutiae from the readings (such as dates or population numbers), but you should be familiar enough with the readings to answer general questions (identify important people and terms, provide a sequence of events, identify a reading's main argument, etc.) or identify general historical periods and sequences of events. Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped from the final grade. Quizzes will be administered at the beginning of class, and there will be no extra time for students who come in late. Pop quizzes will be administered via the iClicker REEF app.

Class participation (10%)

You should be prepared to participate in class discussions each class day. This means you should have read the assigned readings and thought about them. You need to actively engage with your classmates, contribute your own original ideas, discuss classmates' ideas, and have a positive impact on the class discussion. Consistent informed, thoughtful, and considerate class participation is expected.

Attendance will be taken with the iClicker REEF app.

Source Evaluation (10%)

Go to the library and select any scholarly writing about Japan written before 1975. Although you can use online journals instead, you should limit yourself to articles accessed via JSTOR or ProjectMUSE to ensure they are really academic in nature (exceptions are possible: email me). Then write a concise synthesis of the argument of that work, ~250 words. The remainder (~300-400 words) should be an evaluation of the work as a source according to what you have learned about Orientalism and essentialisms. How does the source organize knowledge about Japan? Which parts (if any) use essentialist modes of knowledge, and which parts do not? Which parts of its argument and research are still valuable to us today, and which parts no longer accord with the present critical stance on cultural studies? There is no prescribed format for this essay, and it can be written in a conversational style. You only need one source: the book or article you select. However, you should cite any other sources you borrow words or ideas from.

Research Prospectus (15%)

In this assignment you will explore further one of the non-fictional topics in the *textbook* readings we have done in class (e.g., late Tokugawa cultural developments, modern Japanese food culture, etc.). A reading that you found particularly interesting (or one you particularly disagreed with!) would be a good starting point. This assignment is a research prospectus, where you write through an exploration of a topic and sources available on it, then conclude with what you learned and how you would now frame a long research paper on the topic.

- Begin by clearly stating a research *question* and why it interests you.
- You should then provide a *critical* summary of at least three scholarly secondary sources (writings by scholars on the topic, either from peer-reviewed journals or books from academic presses).
 - This means you should summarize and explain each source’s argument, but also critically identify any problems there might be with the source’s approach or argument.
- Conclude by explaining what you have learned about the topic, and—as an answer to your research question—what the thesis of a potential research paper might be. In other words, end the essay by stating what you would now argue about the topic if you were to write a much longer paper.

You may not count the textbooks as secondary sources. However, works that are cited in the textbooks or mentioned in the “further reading” section are valid, so those might be a good place to start. This essay requires you to talk about your own interests and reflect on what you have learned, but should be written in a formal tone.

There is no length requirement, but you will probably need a paragraph for the introduction, the conclusion, and each of the three source summaries to address the subject completely.

Exams (50%)

The midterm (20%) and final exams (30%) will be taken in class, closed book and closed notes. The final will be cumulative.

Grading Scale

| Grade | Percentage |
|-------|------------|
| A | 93-100 |
| A- | 90-92 |
| B+ | 87-89 |
| B | 83-86 |
| B- | 80-82 |
| C+ | 77-79 |

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|----|-------|
| C | 73-76 |
| C- | 70-72 |
| D+ | 67-69 |
| D | 63-66 |
| D- | 60-62 |
| E | 0-59 |

A grade of C- is not a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, or College Basic distribution credit. For further information on UF's Grading Policy, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>; <https://student.ufl.edu/minus/grades.html>

Course Schedule

- Subject to change: I may add, remove, or rearrange readings (but I'll give you warning in class).
- All readings not in the *Premodern Japan* or *Modern Japanese Culture* textbooks are available on the Canvas (eLearning) course site, unless otherwise noted.
- All Humanities courses are required to include works from the Western canon. Such works are indicated by an asterisk.

| Date | Day | Required Reading |
|------|-----|---|
| 8/23 | F | Class Introduction |
| 8/26 | M | * Said – Orientalism (1978) Benedict – The Chrysanthemum and the Sword (1946) Smith – Bad Takes |
| 8/28 | W | <i>Modern Japanese Culture</i> Chapter 1 |
| 8/30 | F | * Watts – The Way of Zen (1957) * Ginsberg – Howl (1956) <i>Modern Japanese Culture</i> Chapter 19 |
| 9/2 | M | ====Holiday: Labor Day==== |
| 9/4 | W | Schirokauer – A Brief History of Japanese Civilization, Ch. 8 & 9 partial (This reading starts in the middle of a chapter, so google any terms you don't know) Shirane – Issues in Canon Formation |
| 9/6 | F | <i>Modern Japanese Culture</i> Chapter 3 |
| 9/9 | M | <i>Premodern Japan</i> Chapter 1 Kojiki |
| 9/11 | W | <i>Premodern Japan</i> Chapter 2 Man'yōshū |
| 9/13 | F | <i>Premodern Japan</i> Chapter 3, pp. 57-73 (ebook 119-142) Sei Shōnagon – The Pillow Book Kokinshū |

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|-------|---|---|
| 9/16 | M | Murasaki Shikibu – The Tale of Genji |
| | | <i>Premodern Japan</i> Chapter 3, pp. 73-86 (ebook 143-163) The Tale of the Heike |
| 9/18 | W | * Homer – The Iliad |
| | | <i>Premodern Japan</i> Chapter 4 |
| 9/20 | F | Kamo no Chōmei – Hōjōki |
| | | <i>Premodern Japan</i> Chapter 5 pp. 119-140 (ebook 215-248) Matsukaze |
| 9/23 | M | https://youtu.be/esW48t_2KuA?t=23 |
| 9/25 | W | <i>Premodern Japan</i> Chapter 6 |
| | | <i>Premodern Japan</i> Chapter 7 |
| 9/27 | F | Saikaku – Life of a Sensuous Man |
| | | Chikamatsu – The Love Suicides at Sonezaki https://youtu.be/UYIEYnz464Q?t=1147 |
| 9/30 | M | * Shakespeare – Romeo and Juliet Bashō – Narrow Road to the Deep North |
| | | <i>Premodern Japan</i> Chapter 8, pp. 219-221,231-251 (ebook 369-372, 387-418) |
| 10/2 | W | |
| | | Sukeroku |
| 10/4 | F | Sukeroku Video |
| | | <i>Premodern Japan</i> Chapter 9 |
| 10/7 | M | Kyōden – Playboy Roasted a la Edo |
| | | <i>Premodern Japan</i> Chapter 10 |
| 10/9 | W | Tamenaga Shunsui – Spring-Color Plum Calendar |
| 10/11 | F | ==MIDTERM== |
| | | Schirokauer – A Brief History of Japanese Civilization, Ch. 10 Part 1 (late Meiji) |
| 10/14 | M | Futabatei Shimei – The Drifting Cloud Natsume Sōseki – Botchan |
| 10/16 | W | Mori Ōgai – The Dancing Girl |
| 10/18 | F | ====Holiday: Homecoming==== |
| | | Tanizaki Jun'ichirō – The Tattooer |
| 10/21 | M | Shiga Naoya – Infatuation |
| | | Schirokauer – A Brief History of Japanese Civilization, Chapter 10 Part 2 (Taisho) |
| 10/23 | W | Kawabata Yasunari – The Izu Dancer |
| 10/25 | F | Akutagawa Ryūnosuke – Hell Screen |
| | | Meyer – Japan, A Concise History (WWII) |
| 10/28 | M | Dower – Embracing Defeat Sakaguchi Ango – Discourse on Decadence |
| 10/30 | W | Ōe Kenzaburō – Aghwee the Sky Monster |
| 11/1 | F | Mishima Yukio – Yuya |
| 11/4 | M | <i>Modern Japanese Culture</i> Chapter 10 |
| 11/6 | W | <i>Modern Japanese Culture</i> Chapter 4 |
| 11/8 | F | <i>Modern Japanese Culture</i> Chapter 6 |
| 11/11 | M | ===Holiday: Veteran's Day=== |
| 11/13 | W | <i>Modern Japanese Culture</i> Chapter 16 |

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| 11/15 | F | <i>Modern Japanese Culture</i> Chapter 7 |
| 11/18 | M | <i>Modern Japanese Culture</i> Chapter 9 |
| 11/20 | W | Kersten – Neo-nationalism and the ‘Liberal School of History’ |
| 11/22 | F | <i>Modern Japanese Culture</i> Chapter 13 Gravett – Origins Tezuka – Phoenix (This is a selection of discontinuous sections, look for page number jumps) |
| 11/25 | M | ====Holiday: Thanksgiving==== |
| 11/27 | W | ====Holiday: Thanksgiving==== |
| 11/29 | F | ====Holiday: Thanksgiving==== |
| 12/2 | M | McLelland, Suginuma – Sexual Minorities Matsumoto - Funeral Parade of Roses Video (1969) (excerpts) Tagame - My Brother's Husband (2014) |
| 12/4 | W | <i>Modern Japanese Culture</i> Chapter 11 Murakami Haruki – The Elephant Vanishes |
| 12/10 | | Final exam: regular classroom, 10am-12pm |

Class Policies

Attendance

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

You are allowed three unexcused absences. Each unexcused absence greater than three will result in a 1% reduction in your final course grade.

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://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-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.

(e) 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. Stealing, misquoting, insufficiently paraphrasing, or patch-writing.
2. Self-plagiarism, which is the reuse of the Student's own submitted work, or the simultaneous submission of the Student's own work, without the full and clear acknowledgment and permission of the Faculty to whom it is submitted.
3. Submitting materials from any source without proper attribution.
4. Submitting a document, assignment, or material that, in whole or in part, is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment the Student did not author.

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.

Students Requiring Accommodation

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

UF Evaluations Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. 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." The Honor Code

(<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Counseling and Wellness Center

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

The Writing Studio

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> or in 2215 Turlington Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. **Identify, describe, and explain** important historical events and periods in Japan, and how they connect. Examine premodern and modern political, economic, and social structures, and the historical narrative between them. Students will examine these theories in secondary source readings and learn how to apply them to primary source texts. **(H/Content—assessed through class participation, exams)**
2. **Analyze and evaluate** the history of thought about Japan and how it has changed with the postcolonial turn, and how this affects the organization of knowledge about other cultures as well, including our own. **(H&N/Critical Thinking – assessed through Class participation, essays)**
3. **Develop and present** persuasively their own ideas about Japanese primary texts and secondary research, both orally through class discussion, and in writing. **(H/Communication – assessed through class participation, essays.)**
4. **Understand** the global political, social, and economic forces that operate in Japan and how those forces shaped Japanese modernity and ultimately impacted the global history of the twentieth century. **(N/Content—assessed through class discussion, essays, and exams)**
5. **Analyze and evaluate** through literature and secondary readings how a different set of cultural practices, social systems, and religious beliefs produced a modern Japan with both vast differences with and similarities to students' own culture, which fully participates in modern globalization. **(N/Critical Thinking— assessed through class discussion)**