

Department	International College of Liberal Arts		
Semester	Fall 2026	Year Offered (Odd/Even/Every Year)	Even Years
Course Number	HIST/JPNA255		
Course Title	Japanese History in Popular Media		
Prerequisites	HIST/JPNA170 Introduction to Japanese History		
Course Instructor	LEE, I-Zhuen Clarence	Year Available (Grade Level)	2
Subject Area	Japan Studies: History	Number of Credits	3
Class Style	Lecture	Language of instruction	English

(NOTE 1) Depending on the class size and the capacity of the facility, we may not be able to accommodate all students who wish to register for the course

Course Description	<p>This course invites students to think about history via popular media. It seeks to build on the JPNA170: "Introduction to History Course" by focusing on selected topics in Japanese history and society. Each week will be spent on a different topic, ranging from the allergy toward nuclear energy in contemporary Japan to the ban of Christianity in the early modern period. It also provides a platform to consider our role as humans in a world that is increasingly beyond our control by considering our everyday lives. In addition to film and anime, the course also focuses on introducing students to academic writings on the topics, encouraging them to consider their own take vis-à-vis other perspectives.</p> <p>Lectures are not a rehash or paraphrase of the readings. For the most part, they will present new information and suggest new contexts and ideas related to the topic of the assigned reading. "Discussion" will mainly be conducted in groups, where students will "hang out" with their classmates as they consider given discussion questions.</p>
Class plan based on course evaluation from previous academic year	N/A
Course related to the instructor's practical experience (Summary of experience)	N/A
Learning Goals	<p>By the end of this course, students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·Approach popular media about Japan with a critical eye ·Consider, through the assignments, how best to present one's idea and analyses on certain topics in Japanese history. ·Re-think modern media depictions of Japan.

iCLA Diploma Policy	DP1/DP2/DP3/DP4
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iCLA Diploma Policy

(DP1) To Value Knowledge – Having high oral and written communication skills to be able to both comprehend and transfer knowledge

(DP2) To Be Able to Adapt to a Changing World – Having critical, creative, problem-solving, intercultural skills, global and independent mindset to adopt to a changing world

(DP3) To Believe in Collaboration – Having a disposition to work effectively and inclusively in teams

(DP4) To Act from a Sense of Personal and Social Responsibility – Having good ethical and moral values to make positive impacts in the world

Active Learning Methods	Problem-Based Learning/Flipped Classroom/Discussion, Debate/Group Work/Presentation/Workshop, Fieldwork
More details/supplemental information on Active Learning Methods	None
Use of ICT	Powerpoint, Canva, Padlet, Media editing Softwares, etc.

<p>Contents of class preparation and review</p>	<p>This course meets twice a week. Students are expected to attend every session punctually. Screenings and reading assignments must be completed prior to class. Doing so will ensure that you are well equipped for discussion and participation.</p> <p>Students are expected to participate actively in discussion. Each session, several questions based on the assigned readings will be given at the end of the lecture. These questions will be used to guide your discussion and illuminate the assigned readings. You will be given a daily grade ranging from 1-5 for day in class. This will be based on the following scale: 5 - Thoughtful, engaged & prepared; facilitating/encouraging classmates' participation. 4 - Adequate preparation and good participation 2 to 3 - Inadequate preparation and/or inadequate participation 1 - Warm Body 0 - Absent, or present but disruptive to, or disrespectful of, classmates or instructor For more detailed breakdown, please see the course grading rubric.</p>	<p>Hours expected to be spent preparing for class (hours per week)</p>	<p>3 hours</p>	<p>Hours expected to be spent on class review (hours per week)</p>	<p>2 hours</p>
<p>Feedback Methods</p>	<p>All feedback will be given for all assignments. Students may approach the instructor for additional or specific feedback.</p>				

Grading Criteria		
Grading Methods	Grading Weights	Grading Content
<p>Attendance and Discussion Participation</p>	<p>25%</p>	
<p>4 x Random On-the-Spot Media/Textual Criticism</p>	<p>20%</p>	
<p>Two (Group) Presentations on film/readings</p>	<p>20%</p>	
<p>Final Film Analyses Project</p>	<p>35%</p>	

<p>Required Textbook(s)</p>	<p>All readings will be shared in the first week of class. Any additional readings will be supplied to students accordingly.</p>
<p>Other Reading Materials/URL</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Plagiarism Policy</p>	<p>Plagiarism is the dishonest presentation of the work of others as if it were one's own. Duplicate submission is also treated as plagiarism. Depending on the nature of plagiarism committed, you may fail the assignment and/or the course. Repeated acts of plagiarism will be reported to the University, which may result in additional penalties.</p> <p>For policies regarding generative AI usage, please see the attached "JPNA255 AI Policy"</p>
<p>Other Additional Notes (Outline crucial policies and info not mentioned above)</p>	<p>Random Text/Media Criticism: Littered across the semester are four random media/text criticism in-class assignments. These assignments will be hand-written, and you will not be allowed to have access to your computer. They are worth 5% each, amounting to 20% of your final grade. These are mainly short 10-minute assignments that will be conducted in the beginning of class, testing your ability to analyze and consider the day's reading/media. In short, if you come prepared to discuss and think about the assigned materials, you should be ready for this graded portion. More details will be given in the first week of semester.</p> <p>Presentations: Students are required to present twice in class. They will be allowed to choose which weeks they wish to present (on first-come-first-serve basis). Each of these presentations are worth 10% of your final grade, amounting to 20%. More details will be given in the first week of classes.</p> <p>Final Media Analyses (Group) Project: More information will be given during the course.</p>

(NOTE 2) Class schedule is subject to change

Class Schedule	
Class Number	Content
Class 1	Topic: Introductions, Expectations, Overview of the course Reading/Screening: None
Class 2	Topic: Textual Analyses Reading/Screening: R02: Murakami Haruki, "Tony Takitani," in <i>Blind Willow, Sleeping Woman</i> , trans. Philip Gabriel and Jay Rubin (Knopf, 2006).
Class 3	Topic: Film Analysis Reading/Screening: S03: Ichikawa Jun, <i>Tony Takitani</i> (2004)
Class 4	Topic: Low-Affect Living Reading/Screening: R04: "Subtractivism: Low-Affect Living with Ambient Cinema" in <i>Ambient Media, Japanese Atmospheres of Self</i> , by Paul Roquet (University of Minnesota, 2016), pp. 125-149.
Class 5	Topic: Machines and Humans Reading/Screening: S05: Selected episodes of <i>Evangelion</i> (1995)
Class 6	Topic: Modern Time and Human subjectivities Reading/Screening: R06: Christophe Thouny, "Waiting for the Messiah: The Becoming Myth of <i>Evangelion</i> and <i>Densha Otoko</i> ," <i>Mechademia 4</i> (2009): 111-129.
Class 7	Topic: Japan Cool and the rise of Anime Reading/Screening: R07: Susan Napier, "Anime and Local/Global Identity," in <i>Anime: From Akira to Mononoke</i> (NY: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 15-34.
Class 8	Topic: Japanese Identity in Anime Reading/Screening: S08: Shinkai Makoto, <i>Suzume</i> (2002)
Class 9	Topic: Traditions, Metaverses, AI Reading/Screening: S09: Hosoda Mamoru, <i>Summer Wars</i> (2009)
Class 10	Topic: Collaboration, Social Media and Marketing Reading/Screening: R10: Ian Coundry, "Collaborative Networks, Personal Futures," in <i>The Soul of Anime: Collaborative Creativity and Japan's Media Success Story</i> (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), pp. 35-53.
Class 11	Topic: Christianity in Tokugawa Japan Reading/Screening: R11: Miyazaki Kentaro, "Kakure Kirishitan Tradition"
Class 12	Topic: Endo Shusaku and The Swamp of Japan Reading/Screening: S12: Martin Scorsese, <i>Silence</i> (2016)

Class 13	<p>Topic: Twilight Samurai at the end of Times</p> <p>Reading/Screening: S13: Yamada Yoji, Twilight Samurai (2002)</p>
Class 14	<p>Topic: Poverty, Gender, and Prostitution</p> <p>Reading/Screening: R14: Amy Stanley, "From Household to Market"</p>
Class 15	<p>Topic: Anime and war memories</p> <p>Reading/Screening: R15: Susan Napier, "No more Words" and "A Fragmented Mirror," in Anime: from Akira to Princess Mononoke (New York: Palgrave, 2000), pp. 161-173, 232-238.</p>
Class 16	<p>Topic: "Victim' s History"</p> <p>Reading/Screening: S16: In the Corner of this World (Sekai no Katasumi ni, 2016)</p>
Class 17	<p>Topic: Techno-nationalism</p> <p>Reading/Screening: R17: Morris Low, Chapter 6: "Techno-nationalism and the Family"</p>
Class 18	<p>Topic: Nuclear Monstrosities</p> <p>Reading/Screening: S18: Shin-Gojira (2016)</p>
Class 19	<p>Topic: The Fall of the Salaryman</p> <p>Reading/Screening: S19: Kurosawa Kiyoshi, Tokyo Sonata (2008)</p>
Class 20	<p>Topic: Re-evaluating Masculinity in Contemporary Japan</p> <p>Reading/Screening: R20: "Emotional Spaces and Places of Salary Anxiety in Tokyo Sonata," Japanese Studies 31 (3) (2011): 373-386.</p>
Class 21	<p>Topic: Definitions of Ikigai in contemporary Japan</p> <p>Reading/Screening: R21: Gordon Matthews, "Can 'a real man' live for his family?"</p>
Class 22	<p>Topic: Western Fetishization of Ikigai</p> <p>Reading/Screening: S22: Wim Wenders, Perfect Days (2023)</p>
Class 23	<p>Topic: Families as Health of the Nation</p> <p>Reading/Screening: R23: Timothy Lies, "Families, Crisis, and Film"</p>
Class 24	<p>Topic: Open Families</p> <p>Reading/Screening: S24: Koreeda Hirokazu, Shoplifters (2018)</p>
Class 25	<p>Topic: Death and Family Dynamics</p> <p>Reading/Screening: S25: Takita Yōjirō, Departures (2008)</p>

Class 26	<p>Topic: Death, Religion and modern Funerary Practices</p> <p>Reading/Screening: R26: Michihiro Ama, "Transcending death in Departures (Okuribito): A case study of film, literature and Buddhism in modern Japan," <i>Journal of Japanese and Korean Cinema</i> 2 (1) (2010): 35-50.</p>
Class 27	<p>Topic: The Question of "Hope</p> <p>Reading/Screening: R27: Anne Allison, "Home and Hope," in <i>Precarious Japan</i> (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), pp. 77-96.</p>
Class 28	<p>Topic: Bullying as a social issue</p> <p>Reading/Screening: S28: Yamada Naoko, <i>A Silent Voice</i> (Koe no Katachi; 2016)</p>
Class 29	<p>Topic: Student Final Film Project Presentations 1</p> <p>Reading/Screening: None</p>
Class 30	<p>Topic: Student Final Film Project Presentations 2</p> <p>Reading/Screening: None</p>