

Department	International College of Liberal Arts		
Semester	Spring 2026	Year Offered (Odd/Even/Every Year)	Every Year
Course Number	HIST/JPNA370		
Course Title	Approaches to Japan Studies		
Prerequisites	<p>1) At least 2 courses from the following (no more than 1 course from any bullet point):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HIST/JPNA170 Introduction to Japanese History</li> <li>- LANG/JPNA245 Early Modern Japanese Literature OR LANG/JPNA246 Early Modern Japanese History and Literature</li> <li>- HIST/JPNA260 Bodies and Cultures in Modern Japanese History OR HIST/JPNA261 Bodies, Gender, and Identities in Modern Japanese History</li> <li>- SOCI/JPNA270 Japan: Case Studies in Society &amp; Culture OR SOCI/JPNA275 Japan: Case Studies in Faith &amp; Folklore</li> </ul> <p>AND</p> <p>2) JPNL112 Japanese Language 2 OR above</p>		
Course Instructor	LEE, I-Zhuen Clarence	Year Available (Grade Level)	3
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 introduces students to the major skills needed for research in the field of Japan Studies. It covers various standpoints and topics, and emphasizes foundational research methodologies.</p> <p>Liberal arts often presumes that if students are thrown together into a space that is somewhat interdisciplinary, filled with specialists in various fields, they would be able to make connections on their own and emerge as creative thinkers in the process. While one may continue to hope that this is the case, this course aims to equip Japan Studies majors with interdisciplinary skills of research and knowledge required of the humanities. As we will cover a vast array of intellectual fields - from History, Media Studies, Literature, Aesthetics, Philosophy, to Sociology - the course is also open to students of other majors who are interested in the methodologies that are utilized in humanities. The goal is to provide an enabling space for students to be exposed to various methodological approaches to studies in the fields of history, sociology, anthropology, and media studies.</p> <p>Each week will be spent on a different topic, analyzed from one of the methodological perspectives above.</p> <p>This course is reading- and discussion-intensive, with some pockets of lectures included. Students are expected to come prepared to talk about methodologies, approaches, and other critical issues related to the readings.</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>After completing the course, students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>·Plan, conduct, and execute their own research in the field of humanities</li> <li>·Apply the methodological skills and questions necessary to approach any topic within the field.</li> <li>·Consider how to position their own voice vis-a-vis other voices</li> <li>·Continue to explore selected topics of their own interests</li> </ul>

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				
More details/supplemental information on Active Learning Methods	In-class discussion, group work, reflections, etc.				
Use of ICT	In addition to presentation tools (Powerpoint, Canva), students will be asked to use certain LLM models for digital humanities.				
Contents of class preparation and review	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. As students also know, according to YGU/iCLA regulations, students who fail to attend a third of the course will lose the eligibility to be evaluated, and will not earn any credits for the course. (Please refer to the YGU student handbook for university policies.)  Please come to the course with a topic that you are interested in researching in.	Hours expected to be spent preparing for class (hours per week)	3 hours	Hours expected to be spent on class review (hours per week)	2 hours
Feedback Methods	Feedback will be given to all assignments. Students are free to approach the instructor for further comments if required.				

Grading Criteria		
Grading Methods	Grading Weights	Grading Content
Participation, Preparation, and Attendance	20%	More information will be given in Session 1
TWO Book reviews OR THREE Journal Article Reviews	30%	More information will be given in Session 1
TWO Presentations	20%	More information will be given in Session 1
Final Discourse critique Project	30%	More information will be given in Session 1

Required Textbook(s)	None: all texts will sent with a course link.
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Other Reading Materials/URL	None
Plagiarism Policy	<p>Note on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity 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>Generative AI Policy This course allows some use of generative AI for the purposes of research, brainstorming, and quantitative/qualitative analysis. As with my other courses, students are permitted the use of AI tools for the editing of grammar.</p> <p>See AI Policy below for more detailed regulations.</p>
Other Additional Notes (Outline crucial policies and info not mentioned above)	More information will be given in the course.

(NOTE 2) Class schedule is subject to change

Class Schedule	
Class Number	Content
Class 1	<p>Topic: Introductions, Expectations, Overview of the course</p> <p>Assigned Reading: None; but be prepared to come into class with a topic in Japan Studies that you are interested in.</p>
Class 2	<p>Topic: What is Historiography?</p> <p>Assigned Reading: R02: E.H. Carr, What is History, Chapter 1, "The Historian and his facts"</p>
Class 3	<p>Topic: Structure and Agency</p> <p>Assigned Reading: R03: E.H. Carr, Chapter 2, "Society and Individual"</p>
Class 4	<p>Topic: Meiji Restoration? Meiji Revolution?</p> <p>Assigned Reading: R04: Marius Jansen, Emergence of Modern Japan, "The Tokugawa Fall"</p>
Class 5	<p>Topic: History, Sciences, Morality</p> <p>Assigned Reading: R05: Tessa Morris-Suzuki, "Introduction: Confronting the ghosts of war in East Asia"</p>
Class 6	<p>Topic: Atomic Nationalism</p> <p>Assigned Reading: R06: John Dower, "The Bombed"</p>

Class 7	<p>Topic: The End of History?</p> <p>Assigned Reading: R07: Georg G. Iggers, Chapter 10, "The 'Linguistic Turn' "</p>
Class 8	<p>Student Reports, Peer Feedback, and Group Discussion of Ideas</p> <p>Assigned Reading: None</p>
Class 9	<p>Topic: How to read Literature?</p> <p>Assigned Reading: R09: Excerpts from Terry Eagleton, How to Read Literature</p>
Class 10	<p>Topic: Reading a piece of (colonial modern) literature</p> <p>Assigned Reading: R10: Zhang Ailing, Sealed Off</p>
Class 11	<p>Topic: Linking Literature to History</p> <p>Assigned Reading: R11: Weng Leihua, "Modernity in a Wartime Tramcar"</p>
Class 12	<p>Topic: Memoirs, Laws, Self</p> <p>Assigned Reading: R12: Selections from Norma Fields, In the Realm of the Emperor</p>
Class 13	<p>Topic: Religious Discourse in Modern Japan</p> <p>Assigned Reading: Isomae Jun' ichi, "The Concept of 'Religion' : From the Modern Opening of Japan to the Emergence of Religious Studies"</p>
Class 14	<p>Topic: Saints, Heroes, Wizards</p> <p>Assigned Reading: William Deal, "Hagiography and History: The image of Prince Shotoku"</p>
Class 15	<p>Topic: Theories of Religious Influence</p> <p>Assigned Reading: Richard K. Payne and Taigen Dan Leighton, "Introduction" to Discourse and Ideology in Medieval Japanese Buddhism</p>
Class 16	<p>Topic: Nationalistic Shinto</p> <p>Assigned Reading: Selections from Helen Hardacre, Shinto and the State: 1868-1988</p>

Class 17	<p>Student Reports, Peer Feedback, and Group Discussion of Ideas</p> <p>Assigned Reading: None</p>
Class 18	<p>Topic: How do Sociologists approach their research topic?</p> <p>Assigned Reading: R18: Selections from Joel M. Charon, Ten Questions: A Sociological Perspective</p>
Class 19	<p>Topic: Decentered Red-light districts</p> <p>Assigned Reading: R19: Sarah Chaplin, "The Urban Context of Love Hotel Districts"</p>
Class 20	<p>Topic: Family Dynamics</p> <p>Assigned Reading: R20: Kayoko Hashimoto, "The Role of Newspapers in constructing Representations of 'monster parents' "</p>
Class 21	<p>Finalizing The Topic: Student Meetings and presentations</p> <p>Assigned Reading: None</p>
Class 22	<p>Topic: Conducting Digital Humanities</p> <p>Assigned Reading: TBA</p>
Class 23	<p>Topic: Value Judgments and identity</p> <p>Assigned Reading: R23: Charon, "Why Can' t Everyone be like us?"</p>
Class 24	<p>Topic: Approaches to Beauty and Gendered Aesthetics</p> <p>Assigned Reading: R24: Laura Miller, Chapter 2 of Beauty Up, "Aesthetic Salons"</p>
Class 25	<p>Topic: Gendered peoples and Marriage</p> <p>Assigned Reading: R25: Laura Dales, "Representations of Singlehood in Contemporary Japan"</p>
Class 26	<p>Topic: Youth Issues</p> <p>Assigned Reading: R26: Toivonen and Imoto, "Making Sense of Youth Problems"</p>

Class 27	Topic: Sociocultural perspectives of Medicine Assigned Readings: R27: Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, Chapter 8 of <i>Illness and Culture in Contemporary Japan</i> , "Doctors and Outpatients: Bio-Medicine (I)"
Class 28	Topic: Aging Society and the Question of Death Assigned Readings: Kawano Satsuki, Chapter 5 of <i>Nature's Embrace</i> , "Ash-Scattering and Family Relations"
Class 29	Student Finals Presentation
Class 30	Student Finals Presentation