

Japanese Politics and Society

日本の政治学

Henry Laurence x 3528
Hubbard 16

Mon/Wed/Fri 10.40 -11.35 am (Hubbard Pickering Room)

Office Hours: Thursday 2.30-4.00 pm and Friday 1-2.30 pm or by appointment.

These hours may vary from week to week so please pay attention to class announcements.

Lunchtime Hours: if I am eating lunch alone in one of the dining halls, feel free to join me whether you have a quick question or want a longer discussion about anything.

The course explores the nature of Japanese democracy. The first half explores the political development of modern Japan from the Meiji Restoration of 1868, via the nation-building of the 1945 Occupation to the struggles between the Liberal Democratic Party and the opposition groups today. The second half focuses on understanding and explaining government policies on issues such as trade, nuclear energy, gender inequality, the declining birthrate, healthcare, education, civil society, and foreign relations. We give particular consideration to understanding power relationships, and how political institutions shape conflicts between different ideologies and social/economic interests.

The course develops critical thinking skills including (i) understanding and evaluating competing explanations for political and social outcomes (ii) constructing persuasive arguments (iii) writing concise analytic papers.

Readings

The following are available for purchase at the Bowdoin Bookstore, and are also available on 2 hour reserve at the Hawthorne-Longfellow Library:

Ian Neary *The State and Politics in Japan* *2nd Edition* (Cambridge: Polity Press 2019)

Frances McCall Rosenbluth and Michael *Japan Transformed* (Princeton: Princeton U. Press, 2010)

Yoshio Sugimoto *An Introduction to Japanese Society* *4th Edition* (Cambridge: Cambridge U. Press, 2014)

Jeffrey Kingston (ed) *Critical Issues in Contemporary Japan* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014)

Karl Taro Greenfeld *Speed Tribes* (HarperCollins 1995)

Other readings are available through the library website or on Blackboard (*).

Requirements:

- **Participation:** Attend all class sessions, and participate in discussions. Read all assigned readings before the session for which they are set.

- **Current events:** Students should regularly follow current events in Japan in at least one quality newspaper or journal. Your knowledge of current events will be tested with in-class pop quizzes as well as both the midterm and final exams, and will improve your short papers.

I may give out short tests at random asking you to summarize one or more of the week's readings or answer basic current events questions.

- **Midterm examination** (in class)

- **Short Papers** (4 x 3-4 pages) Most weeks, one or more study questions will be given in class [and posted on blackboard]. 4 times during the semester, write a short paper, (1000 words or about 3-4 pages, but going over this amount is fine) answering one of these questions and using evidence drawn from (but not limited to) ALL of the readings assigned for the week/topic, (or all which are relevant) including any recommended readings. You must have completed at least one paper by the midterm and at least three by the end of Thanksgiving break. There is no rewrite option. You may write more than 4: your best 4 will count towards your course grade.

Final Exam OR Final Paper

2-Hour final exam covering all aspects of the course

OR

You may write about 5-7 pages on any aspect of the course that interests you, subject to my approval. Usually you must have earned an average grade of at least B+ in the class so far to get approval. To qualify, you must submit a 2-page proposal by the final day of class. You may turn it in at any time before 5.00 pm on the date of the final. Usually this will be a research paper, but other forms of writing are possible, subject to my approval. (eg a book or movie review tying the book(s)/movie(s) to the themes and readings of the class)

GRADING POLICY

All grades contain irreducible elements of subjectivity, and the following percentages are given *only as rough guide* to the relative importance of each assignment and NOT as a strict formula. Please note that I expect you to perform satisfactorily in ALL aspects of coursework. Poor performance or outright failure in any aspect one may disproportionately affect your final grade, and could result in failing the class.

Midterm:	10 %
4 x 3-4-page papers	4 x 12.5 = 50%
Final exam/paper	20 %
Class participation/tests	20 %

A ROUGH GUIDE TO YOUR CLASS PARTICIPATION GRADE:

A Does all the reading and typically comes to class armed with thorough understanding, lively responses and further questions. Contributes intelligently; listens to and then responds to others. Proactive in initiating and sustaining illuminating discussion. Demonstrates excellent knowledge of current events.

B Does all the reading, contributes regularly. Scores well on tests.

C Does most of the reading, comes regularly to class, and says something, but usually only if called upon. Average test scores

D Comes to class but doesn't usually have much to say about the reading or the discussion.

F Misses classes; and is unable to demonstrate familiarity with readings. Almost never says anything unless asked directly.

CITATIONS and ACADEMIC HONESTY

Citations have two main purposes. (1) To acknowledge and give appropriate credit for other people's work or ideas. (2) To allow your reader to locate (and if necessary consult) your sources

When you use information or ideas that came from someone or somewhere else, you must therefore acknowledge the source appropriately. Deliberate attempts to pass off someone else's work as your own will result in automatic failure of the course and referral to the Judicial Board.

You may use any recognized citation format as long as you are consistent. If in doubt, please use the Chicago Manual of Style 'Notes and Bibliography' format. Quick guides, online and in pdf format, are available on the library website (Citing Sources/Chicago Quick Guide).

PAPER POLICIES

Double-space. Use regular margins (Word default is 1 ¼ inch) and a normal font. (Times 12 point preferred).

Quotations longer than 3 lines should be indented and single-spaced. (“Normal Indent” in Word’s Format/Style menu)

Include PAGE-NUMBERS and DATE.

PROOF-READ. Do NOT just run spell-checker, which often misses basic errors, eg it’s vs. its. Handwritten corrections are welcome.

Include a BIBLIOGRAPHY of all and only the sources you have cited if they are not assigned readings. (Start on a new page. Alphabetize by Author’s last name)

Papers must be submitted in HARD COPY and STAPLED

Going over page limits is fine.

A ROUGH GUIDE TO YOUR PAPER GRADE:

What I expect from a B range paper:

Makes a clear and compelling argument that directly answers the assigned question. Weighs all the available evidence in coming to the conclusion, and uses the best evidence in support of that conclusion. Carefully considers the strongest objections or alternative arguments, and demonstrates why the author’s argument is superior. Defines key terms appropriately. Avoids logical errors in argumentation or errors of fact. Writing style is clear, concise, and error-free.

A range: Typically demonstrates innovative or fresh thinking rather than a straight recapitulation of the arguments of others. Usually draws on evidence or material beyond the assigned readings if appropriate. Alternatively, the paper may do a particularly good job of drawing fresh connections between past and current material.

C range: falls short of some of the standards for a B paper, but it must:

- (1) make a clear argument;
- (2) demonstrate familiarity with the readings;
- (3) be grammatically correct
- (4) be free from factual errors
- (5) follow ALL ELEVEN rules listed in “Paper Policies” and citation guidelines.

Papers which fail on one or more of these basic standards will be in the D or F range.

Provisional Reading and Class Schedule.

(Subject to change: Please check classwide emails)

* = Reading is on Blackboard

[...] [square brackets] = reading is required for paper-writing on that topic, but not required for class.

All journal and newspaper articles are available through the library website or online.

W 9/4	Introduction	
F 9/6	History Meiji	Rosenbluth and Thies Chs 1 and 2
<i>Week 2</i>	Taishō to SCAP	
M 9/9	Meiji	Neary Ch 1
W 9/11	Taishō Democracy	Rosenbluth and Thies Ch. 3 pp 32-42
F 9/13	The Occupation	Neary Ch 2 Rosenbluth and Thies Ch 3 pp 42-52 *Eric Ackerman “Analyze This: Writing in Social Sciences” in <i>They Say/I Say</i> (Gerald Graff and Cathy Berkenstein, eds, 2010)
<i>Week 3</i>	Old Politics 1955-1993	
M 9/16	1955 System	Neary Ch 3
W 9/18	1955 (cont)	Rosenbluth and Thies Ch 4
F 9/20	Explaining LDP rule	*Krauss and Pekkanen “The Rise and Fall of the LDP” <i>Journal of Asian Studies</i> Feb 2011 [*Dan Okimoto “LDP Dominance”]
<i>Week 4</i>	New Politics 1994-2019	
M 9/23	Transformation	Neary Ch 4 (“Hosokawa to Abe)
W 9/25	Electoral Reform	Rosenbluth and Thies Ch 6
F 9/27	Fall and Rise of the LDP 2009-2012	Rosenbluth and Thies Ch 9 and epilogue [Pekkanen, Robert “The 2012 Japanese Election Paradox: How the LDP lost Voters and Won the Election” <i>National Bureau of Asian Research</i> < www.nbr.org > 2012]
<i>Week 5</i>	Political Institutions	
M 9/30	The Diet	Neary Ch 5 (The Diet)

W 10/2	The Bureaucracy	Neary Ch 6 Bureaucratic Structures <i>Speed Tribes</i> “Hiro and Yoshihara” The Best and the Brightest” [* Chalmers Johnson “Market vs Plan Rationality”]
F 10/4	Big business and civil society	Neary Ch 8 (Non-state actors)
Week 6	Review/exam	
M 10/7	Review Session	No reading
W 10/9	<i>Midterm Exam</i>	No reading
F 10/11	TBD	TBA
Week 7		
M 10/14	Fall Break	No Class
W 10/16	Media and politics	CICJ Ch 5 McNeill “Media” pp 64-73 Maggie Farley “Japan’s Press and the Politics of Scandal” [*Susan Pharr “Media as Trickster”] [Kabashima and Steel <i>Changing Politics in Japan</i> (Cornell, 2010) Ch 4 “Changing media, changing politics” (library ebook)] [H Laurence “NHK and Abe’s Agenda” <i>The Diplomat online</i> 2/8/14]
F 10/18	Models of policymaking	*Greg Noble “Who, if anyone, is in charge? Political Power and Bureaucratic Delegation,” Ch 11 in Gill Steel (ed) <i>Power in Contemporary Japan</i> (Palgrave Macmillan 2016) *Muramatsu and Krauss “Patterned Pluralism”
Week 8	Explaining policy outcomes	
M 10/21	Trade policy	CICJ 2 (Mulgan) Trade Policy
W 10/23	Social Welfare	Neary Ch 12
F 10/25	Healthcare	* Reid <i>The Healing of America</i> Chs 3, 6

		[*Ikegami et al. “Universal Health Coverage: evolution” (<i>Lancet</i> , 2011)]
<i>Week 9</i>	Culture and Civil Society	
M 10/28	Volunteering	*Steven Reed <i>Making Common Sense of Japan</i> Ch 2 (25-46) * Mary Alice Haddad “Civic Responsibility Around the World”
W 10/30	Nuclear Energy	CICJ 8 (Kingston) Nuclear energy CICJ Ch 4 Ogawa “Civil Society” *Mure Dickie “Beware post-crisis “Made in Japan” Labels” <i>Financial Times</i> 7/8/2012 [Gerald Curtis “Stop Blaming Japanese Culture for Fukushima” <i>Financial Times</i> 7/10/2012]
F 11/1	Litigation	* Kawashima/Noda and Tanaka (Okimoto and Rohlen #s 38 & 39 pp 191-195), *Haley “The Myth of the Reluctant Litigant” <i>Journal of Japanese Studies</i> Summer 1978 <i>Speed Tribes</i> “Izumi: The Money-Drinkers” and “Dai, the Motorcycle Thief”
<i>Week 10</i>	Gender Politics	
M 11/4	Women	Sugimoto 6 (Gender)
W 11/6	Women (2)	Neary Ch 13 “Human Rights” (section on women)
F 11/8	Birthrate Politics	CICJ 18 Htun “Reproductive rights” *Tiana Norgren “Abortion Before Birth Control” <i>Journal of Japanese Studies</i> 24:1 1998 (JSTOR)
<i>Week 11</i>	Demographics	
M 11/11	Demographic crisis	Sugimoto 85-90 (“Demographic crisis”) CICJ Ch 14 Kingston (“Demographic Dilemmas”) <i>Speed Tribes</i> Otaku]
W 11/13	Minorities	CICJ 16 Cleveland “Minorities” Sugimoto Ch 7
F11/15	Immigration policy	* Haig “Japanese Immigration Policy” Neary Ch 13 (section on minorities, 235-247)
<i>Week 12</i>	Education	

M 11/18		Sugimoto Ch 5 (Education) [*Thomas Rohlen “Japan’s High Schools”]
W 11/20		* Catherine Lewis <i>Educating Hearts and Minds</i> Intro, Ch 8 (178-201) CICJ Ch 18 Aspinall
F 11/22		* Katherine Tegtmeier Pak “Contesting Children’s Citizenship Information: What should Japanese Schoolchildren Know” Ch 2 in Gill Steel (ed) <i>Power in Contemporary Japan</i> (Palgrave Macmillan 2016) [Merry White: Selections]
<i>Week 13</i>	Cool Japan	
M 11/25	Pop Culture	* D McCray “Japan’s Gross National Cool” <i>Foreign Policy</i> May 2002 <i>Speed Tribes</i> “Snix: the Otaku” [“Tusk: Twilight of the Idols”] [Sugimoto ch 9 (Popular Culture)]
W 11/27	Thanksgiving	
F 11/29	Thanksgiving	
<i>Week 14</i>	Foreign Relations (1)	
M 12/2	Soft Power	* Haruki Murakami <i>After the Quake</i> “Superfrog Saves Tokyo” [* David Leheny “A Narrow Place to Cross Swords: Soft Power and Pop Culture” (2006)] [*Thorsten “Soft power Convergence and Democracy in Abe’s Japan” Ch 14 in Gill Steel (ed) <i>Power in Contemporary Japan</i> (Palgrave Macmillan 2016)]
W 12/4	Foreign Policy	* Berger “Pragmatic Liberalism of Adaptive State”
F 12/6	Foreign Policy	Neary Ch 9 <i>Speed Tribes</i> “Ozaki: True Believer”
<i>Week 15</i>	Foreign Relations (2)	
M 12/9	Politics of Memory	* Tom Berger “Politics of Memory” CICJ 10 (Saaler: Good War?)

W 12/11	China & Korea	CICJ Ch 11 (Selden) [* Mike Mochizuki “Dealing with a Rising China” (from T. Berger, ed. <i>Japan in International Politics</i>)]
F 12/20	<i>Final Exam</i> <i>Final Papers Due</i>	Exam 8.30-10.30 Papers due 5.00 pm in Hubbard 16 (HARD COPY)