

## Wa: rules and principles in Japanese Arts, Design and Aesthetics

### Section 1

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| Instructor/Title | DRUET Lucile |
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#### 【Course Outline / Description】

Wa is a pivotal concept in Japan that encompasses many situations. It is a way to maintain social interactions harmoniously, as well as a dynamic framework for creating art. Wa is used in this course as a keyword that offers two levels of understanding about Japanese art: one being “Japaneseness” and the other being the cultivation of quiet, peaceful, and harmonious qualities.

Through the study of zen art and philosophy, ink painting, Ikebana, calligraphy, tea ceremony, poetry and design, this course explores the connections between Wa and other rules and principles connected to art practice and Japanese aesthetics.

### Section 2

#### 【Course Objectives/Goals/Learning Outcomes】

Students will be introduced to considering the common traits of several Japanese arts, such as calligraphy, ink painting, flower arrangement, scroll paintings, tea bowls etc... The students will be invited to think on how those disciplines can connect via the keyword Wa and how each of them uses other meaningful key words to shape their qualities. At the end of the course, the students will be able to tell the ways in which these traditions differ and how they relate through nuance and shared perspective, using their five senses and intellect.

Students should leave their courses with knowledge and skills that they will use in their everyday lives as well as their academic career. These basic skills included in this course thus are : analytic reading, critical thinking, research, writing proficiency and effective communication ability. The course is designed to include components that impart these skills and students will be asked to come to class prepared for discussion, participation, group work and producing research papers.

### Section 3

#### 【Class Schedule/Class Environment, Literature and Materials】

| Class # | Contents  | Readings / preparations   |
|---------|---|---|
| 1       | Course introduction :<br>presentation of the different topics that will be studied in class and grading system. | N/A   |
| 2       | Design 1/5:<br>Terminology  | Note the different key characteristics of Japanese Design as described in:<br>> Patricia Graham, <i>Japanese Design: art, aesthetics and culture</i> (pp.60~67 / 80~111)  |
| 3       | Design 2/5:<br>Soetsu Yanagi and Mingei   | Note the definition of Mingei and why this movement was important for modern art and design:<br>> Kyoko Utsumi Mimura, “Soetsu Yanagi and the Legacy of the Unknown Craftsman”(in <i>The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda</i> |

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|    |   | <i>Arts</i> , p.208-223)   |
| 4  | Design 3/5:<br>Nature and artifice                  | Find one object, artwork, motif, product, poem or text that is reflecting Japanese natural elements (seasons, animals, flowers) and explain it to the class.   |
| 5  | Design 4/5:<br>Wabi-Sabi                            | Find information about the BBC documentary with Marcel Theroux, <i>In Search of Wabi-Sabi</i> (2009)   |
| 6  | Design 5/5: Wabi-Sabi<br>Discussion                 | Understand the meaning and different definitions of the key concepts as seen in:<br>> Andrew Juniper, <i>Wabi-sabi : the art of impermanence</i> (pp.1~3 / 47~52 / 69~87103~120)<br>> Leonard Koren, <i>Wabi-sabi for artists</i> (pp.21~72) |
| 7  | Zen 1/3: Definitions                                | List and understand the different aspects of Zen practice as described in the text listed below :<br>> Shunryu Suzuki, <i>Zen mind, Beginner's mind</i> (pp.21~34)   |
| 8  | Zen 2/3: Zen art                                    | List and understand the different characteristics of Zen arts as described in:<br>> Shin'ichi Hisamatsu, <i>Zen and the Fine Arts</i> (pp.28~38 / 52~60)   |
| 9  | Zen 3/3: Sengai and Hakuin                          | Note the differences and similarities in Hakuin and Sengai's works<br>> Galit Aviman, <i>Zen paintings in Edo Japan</i> (p.33~62)  |
| 10 | Class discussion:                                   | Prepare to discuss the different rules, codes and imagery seen in class #1 thru. # 9   |
| 11 | Calligraphy 1/3: Classics                           | List and take notes on the important elements used in calligraphy as described in:<br>> Christopher Earnshaw, <i>Sho : Japanese calligraphy</i> (pp.2~16 / 95~99)<br>> H.E Davey, <i>Brush meditation</i> (pp.17~23 / 28~ 36)                |
| 12 | Calligraphy 2/3: Moderns and contemporaries         | Find information on the following calligraphers:<br>- Yamaoka Tesshu<br>- Inoue Yu-Ichi  |
| 13 | Calligraphy 3/3: Movie<br>"Kwaidan: Earless Hoichi" | Prepare the class by reading the short story<br>> Lafcadio Hearn, <i>Kwaidan</i> (1907)<br>and gathering information about the movie:<br>> Masaki Kobayashi, <i>Kwaidan</i> (1953)   |
| 14 | <b>Midterm exam</b>                                 | <b>Midterm exam</b>  |
| 15 | Ink painting 1/6: Practice                          | N/A  |

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| 16 | Ink painting 2/6: Classic Schools<br>Kano, Tosa, Bunjin-ga             | Understand the history and the different elements used in traditional ink painting:<br>> Shuichi Kato, <i>Japan spirit and form</i> (pp.94/101~115)  |
| 17 | Ink painting 3/6: Modern Schools<br>Maruyama, Rinpa                    | Look up the definitions and characteristics of each schools:<br>- Maruyama<br>- Rinpa  |
| 18 | Ink painting 4/6: Eccentrics   | Find information on the following painters:<br>- Itō Jakuchū<br>- Soga Shōhaku   |
| 19 | Ink painting 5/6: Bijinga<br>Aesthetics                                | Understand the characteristics of “beauty” in Bijinga paintings as analyzed in:<br>> Pilar Cabanas, “Bijinga and nature” (in Pamela J. Asquith, <i>Japanese images of nature</i> (pp.68~82))   |
| 20 | Ink painting 6/6: Bijinga<br>Uemura Shōen                              | Gather information about Uemura’s life and work, as seen in:<br>> Nanako Yamada and Helen Merritt, “Uemura Shōen: Her paintings of Beautiful Women” (in <i>Woman’s Art Journal</i> , pp.12-16)   |
| 21 | Class discussion   | Prepare to discuss the different rules, codes and imagery seen in class #10 thru. # 20   |
| 22 | Poetry 1/2: Classics<br>Waka<br>Renga                                  | Understand the history and the different categories in Japanese poetry, as seen in:<br>> Addiss, Groemer, Rimer, <i>Traditional Japanese Arts and Culture. An illustrated sourcebook</i> (pp.34- 45/96-101/141-151)  |
| 23 | Poetry 2/2: Haiku  | Note the different characteristics of Haiku poetry as seen in:<br>> Lorraine Ellis Harr, “Haiku Poetry” (in <i>The Journal of Aesthetic Education</i> , p.112-119)<br>> Makoto Ueda, “Bashō and the poetics of Haiku” (in <i>The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism</i> , pp.423-431) |
| 24 | Tea 1/2: Philosophy and terminology                                    | Classify the information about tea ceremony and its aesthetics as seen in :<br>> Herbert Pluschow, <i>Rediscovering Rikyū</i> (p.112~127 / 131~132)<br>> Okakura Kakuzo, <i>The book of tea</i> (pp.7~9 / 23~30 / 37~39 / 48~49)   |
| 25 | Tea 2/2: Principles<br><i>Wa-kei-sei-jaku</i><br><i>Ichi-go Ichi-e</i> | N/A  |
| 26 | Tea 3/3: Thousand Cranes   | Read the whole novel and note how the tea ceremony and its elements are impacting the characters’ love life:<br>> Yasunari Kawabata, <i>Thousand Cranes</i> (1953)   |
| 27 | Ikebana 1/2: Terminology   | Understand the evolution of Ikebana (history and aesthetics) as explained in :   |

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|    |                                    | > Kudo Masanobu, <i>The history of Ikebana</i> (pp.6~13)<br>> Josiah Conder, <i>The flowers of Japan</i> (pp.38~39 / 54-56 / 80~86)  |
| 28 | Ikebana 2/2: Chabana               | Note the characteristics of the tea flower arrangement as described in:<br>> Haruo Shirane, <i>Japan and the culture of the four seasons</i> (p.95~107)  |
| 29 | Conclusion<br>Iki, Yūgen and Fūryū | Note the meaning of the terms Iki, Yūgen and Fūryū as seen in:<br>> Yoji Yamasuke, <i>Japaneseness</i> (pp.131-135) and see how they connect with the other keywords seen throughout the semester (Wa, Wabi-Sabi, Zen, Ki, etc.) |
| 30 | Review for the finals              | Bring your notes and handouts.   |

### 【Textbooks/Reading Materials】

No textbooks needed.

The books used and discussed in this lecture course are first hand materials such as novels, magazines, posters, artworks, movies etc... as well as academic essays. The texts will be given directly to the students as packets and handouts.

Online resources:

- JStor: <https://www.jstor.org>
- Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov>
- Tokyo National Museum / Image search: <http://webarchives.tnm.jp/imgsearch/>
- Google Arts and Culture project: <https://artsandculture.google.com>
- JAANUS: <http://www.aisf.or.jp/~jaanus/>

### Section 4

#### 【Learning Assessments/Grading Rubric】

Quiz: 10%

Midterms: 30%

Finals: 45%

Class participation: 15%

|                     | Type  | Format   |
|---------------------|---|--|
| Quiz                | in class                                      | Circle or write the right answer (10~15 questions)   |
| Midterm exam        | take home                                     | Write a comparative analysis or an essay (4~5 pages)   |
| Final exam          | take home<br>+<br>in class                    | Write a comparative analysis or essay (6~7 pages)<br>+<br>Circle or write the right answer (10~15 questions)               |
| Class participation | continuous monitoring throughout the semester | Oral participation in discussion time and during the lectures<br>+<br>Write reading note cards about the reading materials |

