

The History and Culture of Japanese Martial Arts (Kendō / Jōdō)

Section 1

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【Course Outline / Description】

This course will introduce Japanese martial arts (budō), primarily focusing on Kendō (sword-play) and Jōdō (stick-play), as traditional Japanese culture. The objectives of the course will be to provide the students with basic knowledge on Japanese martial arts and their history (including Bushidō Spirit) as well as to increase their physical fitness levels through actual training of Kendō and Jōdō in a dōjō (special hall for martial arts training).

The Japanese martial arts are esteemed in Japan as the quintessence of traditional culture. They also have reverent worldwide followers. There are now tens of millions more non-Japanese enthusiasts practicing budō than Japanese.

Kendō (剣道: けんどう) is one of such modern Japanese martial arts in which players use shinai (bamboo swords) as they compete to strike four specific areas on the opponent's bōgu (armor). Kendo is characterized by always showing respect to one's opponents, the honoring of protocol and culture, and the importance placed on enriching one's heart through training.

Jōdō (杖道: じょうどう) is a classical Japanese martial art using a stick called jō. The art is strongly focused upon defense against the Japanese sword. Jodo is reputed to have been invented by the great swordsman Musō Gonnosuke Katsuyoshi about 400 years ago, after a bout won by the famous Miyamoto Musashi. According to this tradition, Gonnosuke challenged Musashi using a stick, a weapon he was said to wield with great skill.

Section 2

【Course Objectives/Goals/Learning Outcomes】

By the end of this course, students will be able to understand the history and culture of Japanese martial arts (in particular, Kendō) and Bushidō Spirit, and also be able to perform basic techniques of Kendō and Jōdō.

Section 3

【Class Schedule/Class Environment, Literature and Materials】

	Schedule of Instruction	Work Outside of Classroom Activities
Lecture 1	(Class Room Session) Overview of the Course / Introduction to Kendō and Jōdō	Read the syllabus.

Lecture 2	(Dōjō Session) Stretching / Warming Up / Reigi (the way of physical expression for spirit of respect and courtesy)	Review and Hitori-geiko (Solo-Practice).
Lecture 3	(Class Room Session) What is Japanese Martial Arts?	Read the assigned material.
Lecture 4	(Dōjō Session) Ashisabaki (Footwork) / Kamae (Posture) / Suburi (Shadow Swing)	Review and Hitori-geiko (Solo-Practice).
Lecture 5	(Class Room Session) Development of Swordsmanship (1) - Up to The Warring States (Sengoku) Period	Read the assigned material.
Lecture 6	(Dōjō Session) Nippon Kendo Kata (1) – Kata No. 1	Review and Hitori-geiko (Solo-Practice).
Lecture 7	(Class Room Session) Development of Swordsmanship (2) – Up to Edo (Tokugawa) Period	Read the assigned material.
Lecture 8	(Dōjō Session) Nippon Kendō Kata (2) – Kata No. 2	Review and Hitori-geiko (Solo-Practice).
Lecture 9	(Class Room Session) The Impact of Buddhist Thought on the Development of Swordsmanship	Read the assigned material.
Lecture 10	(Dōjō Session) Nippon Kendō Kata (3) – Kata No. 3	Review and Hitori-geiko (Solo-Practice).
Lecture 11	(Class Room Session) Mushin / Ki-ai / Zanshin / Heijō-shin	Read the assigned material.
Lecture 12	(Dōjō Session) Nippon Kendō Kata (4) – Kata No. 4	Review and Hitori-geiko (Solo-Practice).
Lecture 13	(Class Room Session) Mid-term Exam (Class Room Lecture Portion)	Study to be prepared for the mid-term exam.
Lecture 14	(Dōjō Session) Nippon Kendō Kata (5) – Kata No. 5	Review and Hitori-geiko (Solo-Practice).
Lecture 15	(Class Room Session) Review Mid-term Exam / Shintō Musō Ryu Jōdō	Read the assigned material.

Lecture 16	(Dōjō Session) Jōdō (1) - Kihon Nos. 1-3 (Honte-uchi, Gyakute-uchi & Hikiotoshi-uchi)	Review and Hitori-geiko (Solo-Practice).
Lecture 17	(Dōjō Session) Jōdō (2) - Kihon Nos. 4, 7 & 10 (Kaeshi-zuki, Kuritsuke & Tsukihazushi-uchi)	Review and Hitori-geiko (Solo-Practice).
Lecture 18	(Dōjō Session) Jōdō (3) – Kata No. 1 (Tsukizue)	Review and Hitori-geiko (Solo-Practice).
Lecture 19	(Dōjō Session) Jōdō (4) – Kata No. 2 (Suigetsu)	Review and Hitori-geiko (Solo-Practice).
Lecture 20	(Dōjō Session) Jōdō (5) – Kata No. 3 (Hissage)	Review and Hitori-geiko (Solo-Practice).
Lecture 21	(Dōjō Session) Jōdō (6) – Kata No. 4 (Shamen)	Review and Hitori-geiko (Solo-Practice).
Lecture 22	(Dōjō Session) Jōdō (7) – Kata No. 5 (Sakan)	Review and Hitori-geiko (Solo-Practice).
Lecture 23	(Dōjō Session) Review Nippon Kendō Kata and Jōdō Kata	Review and Hitori-geiko (Solo-Practice).
Lecture 24	(Dōjō Session) Review Nippon Kendō Kata and Jōdō Kata	Review and Hitori-geiko (Solo-Practice).
Lecture 25	(Dōjō Session) Review Nippon Kendō Kata and Jōdō Kata	Review and Hitori-geiko (Solo-Practice).
Lecture 26	(Dōjō Session) Review Nippon Kendō Kata and Jōdō Kata	Review and Hitori-geiko (Solo-Practice).
Lecture 27	(Dōjō Session) Preparation for Tournament Match	Review and Hitori-geiko (Solo-Practice).
Lecture 28	(Dōjō Session) Tournament Match	Review and prepare for the match.
Lecture 29	(Class Room Session) Development of Bushidō, The Code of Samurai	Read the assigned material.

Lecture 30	(Dōjō Session) Total Review	
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【Textbooks/Reading Materials】

No textbook is used. Reading materials for each lecture (class room sessions) will be made available through Blackboard system or handed out in advance.

For Dōjō sessions, students are required to purchase one bamboo sword, one wooden sword and one wooden stick (in total, JPY 8,500). The instructor or the Registrar's Office will make these items available for purchase by the students in advance or at the time of the first Dōjō session.

Section 4

【Learning Assessments/Grading Rubric】

Final Exam (for class room sessions) – 30%
 Midterm Exam (for class room sessions) – 30%
 Serious participation in the Dōjō sessions – 20%
 Performance at the Tournament Match – 20%

Section 5

【Additional Information】

As the classes involve fairly hard physical activity, you should wear suitable clothing for exercise in Dōjō sessions.

For the last Dōjō Session, we will hold tournament matches of both Kendō-Kata and Jōdō-Kata. I will invite two guest speakers who will serve as judges of the matches as well as perform demonstrations of Kendo-Kata and Jōdō-Kata together with me.