

Shinto

Section 1

Instructor/Title	Dr. John A. SHULTZ
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【Course Outline / Description】

Shinto is the religious tradition associated with the kami, the indigenous deities of Japan. It is said that there are eight million kami, ranging from the mundane and nearby to the extraordinary and distant. Throughout the past and today, Japanese have respected, implored, and feared these kami. While having strong connections to the natural world, Shinto has also manifest a deeply political and nationalistic character. Likewise, Shinto themes are heavily represented in Japanese popular culture, including anime, manga, and mascot characters. All of these complexities make Shinto an intriguing and essential topic to understand Japanese history and society. This course will take a big picture approach to the subject, unlocking the intricacies and mysteries of the kami and of kami worship.

Section 2

【Course Objectives/Goals/Learning Outcomes】

-to articulate the meaning and role of kami and shrines in contemporary Japan and throughout history
 -to ascertain the larger implications for culture and society raised by the myriad issues with respect to Shinto

Section 3

【Class Schedule/Class Environment, Literature and Materials】

Day 1 Introduction
 Day 2 What are kami? What is Shinto?
 Day 3 Shinto Mythology: Cosmology and Genesis
 Day 4 Shinto Mythology: The Sun Goddess and Her Troublesome Brother
 Day 5 Shinto Mythology: Okuninushi, Romantic Relations, and Love Shrines
 Day 6 Shinto Mythology: The Heavenly Kami Colonize the Earth
 Day 7 The Intricacies of the Shinto Shrine: Types and Archetypes
 Day 8 The Intricacies of the Shinto Shrine: Structures and Layout
 Day 9 The Blessings of the Kami: This-Worldly Benefits
 Day 10 Mini-Research Project #1: Shrine Profile (Preparation Class)
 Day 11 Mini-Research Project #1: Shrine Profile (Presentation/Discussion Class)
 Day 12 Matsuri: The Festivals of the Gods
 Day 13 Shinto and Other Religious Traditions
 Day 14 Inari: Japan's Favorite Kami
 Day 15 Mid-Term Exam Review
 Day 16 Mid-Term Exam
 Day 17 Shinto and the State: Emperor Worship and Nationalism
 Day 18 Shinto and the State: Yasukuni Shrine
 Day 19 Shinto and the State: Film: "The Sun"
 Day 20 Shinto and the State: Film: "The Sun" (Discussion)
 Day 21 Mountains and Kami: A Consideration of Mt. Fuji
 Day 22 Mountains and Kami: Shugendo

Day 23 Green Shinto: The Kami and Environmentalism
Day 24 Women and Shinto: Shaman, Miko, Good-Luck Daughters, and Brides
Day 25 Shinto and Popular Culture: Introduction
Day 26 Mini-Research Project #2: Shinto in Pop Culture (Preparation Class)
Day 27 Mini-Research Project #2: Shinto in Pop Culture (Presentation/Discussion Class)
Day 28 Shinto and Popular Culture: Film
Day 29 Shinto and Popular Culture: Film Discussion
Day 30 Final Exam Review

【Textbooks/Reading Materials】

All reading materials will be provided by the instructor.

Section 4

【Learning Assessments/Grading Rubric】

Mid-term Exam 33%
Final Exam 33%
Homework/Quizzes 22%
Participation 12%

2.5% will be deducted from the final grade for each unexcused absence.