

History of Modern Japan A/B

Section 1

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【Course Outline / Description】

This course provides students with a broad survey of the political, economic, social and cultural developments in Japan, from the era of the Tokugawa Shogunate up to the recent past. Major themes include examining the rise and fall of the Shogunate, the "opening" of the nation, economic and technological development under the Meiji government, the crises of the Taisho and Showa eras, Japan at war, the postwar "miracle," and the "lost decade(s)." An important emphasis throughout the course is on Japan's role in the wider world, how events in Japan were impacted by global forces, and how Japan in turn contributed to global historical changes.

Each class session is very interactive. A typical session involves a combination of brief lectures, source analyses, viewing of film clips or other visual sources, and group discussions or class discussions about that day's assigned readings. By the end of the course students will have a good general knowledge of Japan's history, in the wider context of world history, since about 1600 CE.

Students will write three papers in the course, which are based on assigned readings and require students to effectively utilize the source materials in constructing their arguments. Participation in daily class discussions is also a significant part of the students' grade, so active and involved participation, as well as conscientious reading of assignments is a requirement of the class. There are also weekly discussions board postings which make up part of the student's participation grade. These require analysis, research, and appropriate use of historical source materials.

Section 2

【Course Objectives/Goals/Learning Outcomes】

The goal of the course is not to analyze the history of Japan "in a box," but to understand how the modern history of the nation has been impacted by global historical changes, while also understanding how some of the unique cultural characteristics of Japan's peoples and other internal factors also exerted a profound influence on historical change and continuity. This means that a considerable part of our analysis of Japan's modern history is done from a comparative viewpoint, in which we compare and contrast the developments in Japan with what happened in societies with similar or contrasting historical experiences.

By the end of the course, students will: have acquired a broad general knowledge of the history of modern Japan; be able to communicate effectively and analyze complex questions about the history of modern Japan; be able to understand the history of modern Japan within the wider context of world history.

Section 3

【Class Schedule/Class Environment, Literature and Materials】

All Zoom session information, including meeting ID numbers and passcodes, will be provided to students on the course Blackboard page.

Week 1 Synchronous Zoom Session: Introduction to the course

Week 1 Asynchronous- Read assignments and post thoughts to **Forum 1-** Topic for this week is “Economic and Social Conditions in Premodern Japan” (Read Gordon Chapter 1, *Musui's Story* p. 1-42, plus other materials in assignments folder)

Week 2 JST Synchronous Zoom Session: “Establishment of the Tokugawa Shogunate”

Week 2 Asynchronous- Read assignments and post thoughts to **Forum 2 -** Topic for this week is “Tokugawa at its Peak of Power” (Read *Musui's Story* p. 43-98; Gordon Chapter 2, *Musui's Story* p. 98-146, plus other materials in assignments folder)

Week 3 Synchronous Zoom Session: “Internal and External Challenges to the Regime”

Week 3 Asynchronous- Read assignments and post thoughts to **Forum 3 -** Topic for this week is “Downfall of the Tokugawa” (Read *Musui's Story* p. 147-57; Gordon Ch. 4, Ch.5, plus other materials in this week’s assignments folder)

Week 4 Synchronous Zoom Session: “Meiji Restoration/Revolution”

Week 4 Asynchronous- Read assignments and post thoughts to **Forum 4-** Main topic for this week is “Meiji Reforms and the Remaking of Society” (Read Gordon 6, plus other materials in this week’s assignments folder)

Week 5 Synchronous Zoom Session: “Industrial Age in Japan” (Read Gordon Chapter 7 prior to this session)

Week 5 Asynchronous- First paper

Week 6 Synchronous Zoom Session: “Building of a Capitalist System” and “The Move Towards Empire” (Read Gordon Chapter 8, plus other materials in this week’s assignments folder)

Week 6 Asynchronous- Read assignments and post thoughts to **Forum 5-** Main topic for this period: “Late Meiji” (Read Gordon Chapter 9, *Kokoro* Part I, and other materials in this period’s assignments folder)

Week 7 Synchronous Zoom Session: “Late Meiji”

Week 7 Asynchronous- Read assignments and post thoughts to **Forum 6-** Main topic for this

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week: “Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars” (Read *Kokoro* Part II, *Kokoro* Part III, and other materials in this week’s assignments folder)

Week 8 Synchronous Zoom Session: “Japan and World War I,” wrap-up discussion on *Kokoro*

Week 8 Asynchronous- Read assignments and post thoughts to **Forum 7-** Main topic for this week: “Taisho Democracy” (Read Gordon Chapter 10 and other materials in this week’s assignments folder)

Week 9 Synchronous Zoom Session: “Depression Era Economic and Political Change”

Week 9 Asynchronous- Read assignments and post thoughts to **Forum 8-** Main topic for this week: “Japan, Asia, and the West” (Read Gordon Chapter 11, chapter 12, and other materials in this week’s assignments folder)

Week 10 Synchronous Zoom Session: “War with China, Pearl Harbor and Mobilization for War,” Review for 2nd paper

Week 10 Asynchronous- Second Paper

Week 11 Synchronous Zoom Session: “War at Home and Abroad” (Read Dower Chapter 1, 2 and other materials in the assignments folder)

Week 11 Asynchronous- Read assignments and post thoughts to **Forum 9-** “War at Home and Abroad” (Read Dower Chapter 4-5, 8-9 and other materials in this week’s assignments folder)

Week 12 Synchronous Zoom Session: “War at Home and Abroad,” wrap-up discussion on Dower

Week 12 Asynchronous- Read assignments and post thoughts to **Forum 10-** Main topic for this week: “The Bombing of Japan” (Read *Japan at War* Chapter 16, 17, and 19, and other materials in this week’s assignments folder)

Week 13 Synchronous Zoom Session: “Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and the Surrender,” wrap-up discussion about *Japan at War*

Week 13 Asynchronous- Read assignments and post thoughts to **Forum 11-** Main topic for this week: “The Allied Occupation” (Read Gordon Chapter 13, 14, 15 and other materials in this week’s assignments folder)

Week 14 Synchronous Zoom Session: “The LDP and the Yoshida Doctrine,” “The “Economic Miracle””

Week 14 Asynchronous- Heisei and Reiwa Japan (readings to be announced)

Week 15 Synchronous Zoom Session- “Japan-US Postwar Relations,” “Contemporary Issues in Japan,” Final Paper Review

Week 15 Asynchronous- Final Paper

Syllabus, including schedule of topics and reading assignments, are subject to change. The most updated and detailed information is found on the course Blackboard page.

【Textbooks/Reading Materials】

- Andrew Gordon, *A History of Modern Japan* (Oxford University Press)
- Natsume Soseki, *Kokoro* (Penguin Classics)
- Katsu Kokichi, *Musui's Story* (University of Arizona Press)
- John W. Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (Pantheon Books)
- Haruyo Taya Cook and Theodore F. Cook, *Japan at War: An Oral History* (The New Press)
- Other articles, primary sources, secondary sources, videos, and other relevant materials will also be assigned and listed in the weekly “Assignments” folders on Blackboard

Section 4

【Learning Assessments/Grading Rubric】

Papers (X's 3)- 20% each, 60% of total grade

Class participation in synchronous Zoom sessions- 20%

Participation in asynchronous work- 20%

The **papers (3 of them)** are based on the readings and are worth a combined 60% (or 20% each). Each paper should be 1500-3000 words. Each individual essay (3 essays per paper) should be between 500-1000 words. Papers must include footnotes, endnotes, or parenthetical citations and a bibliography listing all sources used (books, articles, internet sites, etc.). You should also include a word count at the end of each essay. These will be based on the material covered in the class, including the readings, lectures, and activities. To do well, you will need to keep up with the readings and take good notes during all class sessions.

Class participation in synchronous Zoom sessions is based on active and involved participation in discussions and activities, preparedness throughout the semester (demonstrating that you have done the readings and are engaging with the material) and maintaining a positive attitude in our sessions. Class participation is worth 20% of your final grade.

Participation in asynchronous work is the grade for weekly asynchronous assignments. Most weeks, students will be given a folder of assignments to read and questions to discuss using the “Discussions” section of Blackboard. Each week’s discussion board postings (called forums) will be graded from 0-10 points based on content, organization, clarity of writing, and use of sources to support your responses. Each forum posting must be properly formatted, using both internal citations/references (footnotes, endnotes, or parenthetical citations) and a bibliography/works cited. Each forum posting should be a minimum of 250 words (no maximum). Include a word count at the end of each forum posting. Participation in asynchronous work is worth 20% of your final grade for the class.

Section 5

【Additional Information】

Attendance and active participation are required in this course and are a significant part of

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the grade. To do well in the course, you should prepare all reading and writing assignments prior to each class meeting and be prepared to actively participate in live class discussions. Thoughtful and informed discussions are an important part of the class.