

The Japanese Warrior: History, Religion and Philosophy

Section 1

Instructor/Title	John A. Shultz, PhD
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【Course Outline / Description】

Visions of the Japanese warrior in his many forms loom largely through the history of East Asia and through popular sentiments of what being a warrior is all about. Martial arts and the profession of soldiery are described in Japan as a “path” or “way.” This implies that such disciplines are not reducible to technical skills, but represent an ideology. Indeed, a continual refrain from the distant past to the present is that the spirit of the warrior lies at the very heart of Japanese people and Japanese culture.

In this course, we seek to examine the character of the Japanese warrior throughout history to determine what constitutes the worldview of Japanese combatants and if such worldviews have maintained any consistency over time. More specifically, we will look at archetypical warriors using prototypical weapons in exemplary battles through famous literature, films, and historical accounts.

Section 2

【Course Objectives/Goals/Learning Outcomes】

- to articulate the various ideologies and worldviews pertaining to the Japanese warrior
- to demonstrate a working understanding of Japanese history as it pertains to warriors
- to be able to explain a complex topic by employing non-print media, such as film

Section 3

【Class Schedule/Class Environment, Literature and Materials】

1.) Course Introduction

2.) Yamato the Brave

READING: Kojiki p. 232-252

3.) The Early Japanese Military: Crossbows and Confucianism

READING: From Samurai, Warfare, and the State by Karl Friday p.68-85

4.) The Revolt of Taira Masakado

READING: From Konjaku Monogatari “How Taira M. Revolted and was Killed” p.384-389;
Shomonki (The Tale of Masakado) p. 129-140

5.) Introduction to the Tale of Heike;

READING: by McCullough p.1-11

6.) Heike: The Battle of Uji Bridge and *Sōhei*

READING: by McCullough p.152-155; *Japanese Warrior Monks* p. 1-41

7.) *Sōhei: Myth and Reality*; Polearms

READING: *Japanese Warrior Monks* p. 41-58; *Japanese Polearms* p. 17-84

QUIZ: Recitation of the First Lines of the Heike

8.) Heike: The Death of Yoshinaka;

READING: by McCullough p.286.3-293.9

9.) Heike: Yoshitsune and Benkei

READING: by McCullough p.302.6-317

10.) Heike: The Battle of Dannoura

READING: by McCullough p. 358-380

11.) *Hōganbiki*; Death of Yoshitsune; and *Seppuku*

READING: by Rankin p.41.3-45.6

12.) Film "The Seven Samurai"

Complete review of Heike materials.

13.) Class Discussion "The Seven Samurai"

14.) Review Session for the Mid-Term Exam

Prepare essays and questions for the examination.

15.) Mid-term Exam

Prepare essays and questions for the examination.

16.) Work Session for Creative Projects: Themes

Complete the written homework assignments for the project

17.) Heroes of the Battle of Osaka Castle

READING: "Winter of Discontent: The Siege of Osaka Castle" by Niderost p.1-4

18.) The Two-swords Philosophy of Miyamoto Musashi

READING: *The Book of Five Rings* p.15-71; p. 178-181 (Bilingual Reading!)

19.) Work Session for Creative Projects: Techniques

Complete the written homework assignments for the project

20.) Ninja! Facts and Fictions

READING: From *The True Path of the Ninja* p. 15-56; p. 65-68;

21.) Ninja II: Infiltration, Intelligence, and Magic

READING: From *The True Path of the Ninja* p. 78- 80; p.107-119; p. 122-125; p. 159-167

22.) Creative Project Presentations

ALL PROJECTS DUE @ 3PM

23.) Creative Project Presentations

24.) Creative Project Presentations

25.) The “Bushidō Bible”: *The Hagakure*

READING: From *The Hagakure* p. 1-10

26.) The Mighty Samurai Sword

READING: "The Samurai Sword" p. 1-15

27.) Introduction to the Pacific War

READING: U.S. Army Field Manual “The Jap Soldier” p. 2-124 (many pictures!)

28.) Soldier's Hell: The Experience of New Guinea

READING: “The Green Desert of New Guinea” by Ogawa Masatsugu p. 267-276

29.) Zero Ace Sakai Saburo

READING: “Zero Ace” by Sakai p. 135-145.4

30.) Review Session for the Final Exam

Prepare essays and questions for the examination.

【Textbooks/Reading Materials】

*All course reading materials will be provided by the professor or will be available online

Section 4

【Learning Assessments/Grading Rubric】

Mid-Term Exam	25%
Final Exam	25%
Creative Project	25%
Quizzes/Homework	12%
Participation	13%

Breakdown of Participation Scoring:

90-100% Always prepared and contributing valuable comments and questions nearly every class

80-100% Nearly always prepared and generally contributing valuable comments and questions during most classes

70-80% rarely provides unsolicited comments or questions, but is generally prepared and attentive during class

<70 has not demonstrated either preparedness or attentiveness; does not offer valuable comments or questions

Section 5

【Additional Information】

Regular attendance is required for this course. **2.5% will be deducted from the student's final grade for each absence.** Students are required to be prepared by carefully reading the assignments. The instructor reserves the right to employ unannounced quizzes, take-home assignments, or in-class writings to monitor student preparation.