

Political Humor and Manipulation in Japanese and Western World Media

Section 1

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【Course Outline / Description】

The main goal of this course is to introduce students to the study of the relationship between political humor and manipulation that occurs in editorial cartoons and comic strips in numerous newspapers and online news sites from both Japan and the Western World. Students will analyze editorial cartoons and socio-political comic strips that comment on the current political and economic situation in Japan, and in Western World countries. They will also read related news stories that provide context. Throughout this analytic process, they will recognize how certain ideologies are disseminated and controlled by the political humor published in the newspapers. The students will be evaluated through exams, group work, homework and individual participation. Lectures, discussions, group activities, and problem-solving exercises will be the main instruction style used in this course.

Section 2

【Course Objectives/Goals/Learning Outcomes】

The main goal of this course is to introduce students to the study of the relationship between political humor and manipulation. To this end, students will:

- discuss what humor is;
- analyze and compare different theories of verbal humor;
- recognize different types of political humor (political satire and parody);
- analyze and compare editorial cartoons and socio-political comic strips that comment on the current political and economic situation in Japan, and in Western World countries;
- present the result of their analysis to the whole class.

Section 3

【Class Schedule/Class Environment, Literature and Materials】

Lesson 1	Introduction to the course, and Syllabus discussion.	Review Syllabus
Lesson 2	What is humor? What makes us laugh?	Reading: Shōkichi Oda, "Laughter and the Traditional Japanese Smile," <i>Understanding Humor in Japan</i> , (Davis, 2006), 15-24. Homework: Collect examples of humor that you enjoy.
Lesson 3	The Incongruity Theory.	Reading: Reading: Hiroshi Inoue, "Osaka's Culture of Laughter," <i>Understanding Humor in Japan</i> , (Davis, 2006), 27-33.
Lesson 4	The Incongruity Theory.	Homework: Collect examples of jokes in English and/or Japanese and categorize them under the types discussed in class. Bring them to class.
Lesson 5	The Superiority Theory.	Homework: Collect jokes that are circulating with specific groups as the target of humor. Bring them to class.

Lesson 6	The Superiority Theory.	Homework: Collect jokes that are circulating with specific groups as the target of humor. Bring them to class.
Lesson 7	The Relief Theory.	Homework: Find an example of humor (in English and/or Japanese) with elements of taboo-breaking that are potentially offensive. Bring them to class.
Lesson 8	The Relief Theory.	Homework: Find an example of humor (in English and/or Japanese) with elements of taboo-breaking that are potentially offensive. Bring them to class.
Lesson 9	What is political humor?	Reading: S. Robert Lichter, Jody C. Baumgartner, and Jonathan S. Morris. "Chapter 1. Introduction: Politics is a Funny Business." <i>Politics is a Joke! How TV Comedians Are Remaking Political Life</i> , 1 - 8.
Lesson 10	The content of political humor.	Homework: Collect political cartoons and bring them to class.
Lesson 11	Political humor, political satire, parody, and irony.	Reading: Dannagal G. Young. "Theories and Effects of Political Humor: Discounting Cues, Gateways, and the Impact of Incongruities." (https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199793471.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199793471-e-29)
Lesson 12	Toward a categorization of political humor.	Homework: Categorize the political cartoon you collected according to the categorization discussed in class.
Lesson 13	Political cartoons	Reading: Anne McCallum, "The Evolution of Political Cartoons Through a Changing Media Landscape." (http://www.people.vcu.edu/~djbrumle/cartoon04/projects/anne/index.htm). Homework: Examine cartoons from the collection: Pat Oliphant (http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/oliphant/obj-list.html)
Lesson 14	Political cartoons	Study for the Midterm Exam
Lesson 15	Midterm Exam.	
Lesson 16	The audience of contemporary political humor.	Reading: Social Media as Source of News (https://www.journalism.org/2016/05/26/news-use-across-social-media-platforms-2016/)
Lesson 17	The audience of contemporary political humor.	Reading: Pew Research: Candidates' social media outpaces their websites and emails as an online campaign news source (http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/07/20/candidates-social-media-outpaces-their-websites-and-emails-as-an-online-campaign-news-source/)
Lesson 18	Political humor and manipulation. What is manipulation?	Reading: Amy Becker and Ashley Anderson. "Using Humor to Engage the Public on Climate Change: the Effect of Exposure to One-sided vs. Two-sided Satire on Message Discounting, Elaboration and Counterarguing." (https://jcom.sissa.it/archive/18/04/JCOM_1804_2019_A07)

Lesson 19	Our corpus: political cartoons, news, editorials, and commentaries.	Homework: Collect at least six (6) political cartoons, news, editorial, and commentaries related to a current political and economic situation in Japan, and in Western World countries. Bring them to class.
Lesson 20	Political Cartoon Analysis.	Homework: Analyze the political cartoons you collected using the guide, material and examples discussed in class.
Lesson 21	Political Cartoon Analysis.	Homework: Analyze the political cartoons you collected using the guide, material and examples discussed in class.
Lesson 22	Political Cartoon Analysis.	Homework: Analyze the political cartoons you collected using the guide, material and examples discussed in class.
Lesson 23	Political Cartoon Analysis.	Homework: Analyze the political cartoons you collected using the guide, material and examples discussed in class.
Lesson 24	Political Cartoon Analysis.	Homework: Analyze the political cartoons you collected using the guide, material and examples discussed in class.
Lesson 25	Political Cartoon Analysis.	Homework: Analyze the political cartoons you collected using the guide, material and examples discussed in class.
Lesson 26	Preparatory Session for Presentations	Work on your presentation
Lesson 27	Presentations.	Work on your presentation
Lesson 28	Presentations.	Work on your presentation
Lesson 29	Presentations.	Work on your presentation
Lesson 30	Course review and feedback.	Review the materials covered through the course.
Notes		
Notes: The schedule is tentative; the topics covered on each proposed date may change/expand depending on the understanding background and pace of the students.		

【Textbooks/Reading Materials】

Notes: A comprehensive reading packet will be provided by the professor.

Section 4

【Learning Assessments/Grading Rubric】

Final Exam 【required field】	25	%
Midterm Exam	25	%
Writing Assignments	0	%
Work Outside of Classroom Activities[※]	15	%
(Class Participation)	15	%
(Presentation)	20	%

Section 5

【Additional Information】

- **CLASS PARTICIPATION.** Students are expected to be active members and to be thoroughly prepared for each class period. Students should be prepared to lead and/or participate in discussions and/or debates basing their comments on the assigned materials. Their daily oral participation grade will be based on classroom activities, group performance, and large- and small-group discussions.
- **WORK OUTSIDE OF CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES.** Students are expected to prepare daily for class, reading and studying the corresponding materials. Students will be responsible for checking the syllabus to know by when activities need to be completed.
- **EXAMS.** There will be two written exams during the term, the Midterm and the Final. I will announce the contents of each exam in class in advance of the exam day.
- **PRESENTATION.** The last two weeks of the semester, students will be required to give a 10-15 minute presentation to the class. The presentation is an integrated assignment that incorporates major aspects of individual students' learning from the entire semester. Each student will be assigned to speak on a specific date.

Reference Books①	
Title	The Language of Humor
Author	Alisson Ross
Publisher	Routledge
ISBN	0 - 415 - 16912 - 7
Reference Books②	
Title	Politics is a Joke! How TV Comedians Are Remaking Political Life
Author	S. Robert Lichter, Jody C. Baumgartner, and Jonathan S. Morris.
Publisher	Westview Press
ISBN	978 - 0 - 8133 - 4717 - 2
Reference Books③	
Title	Understanding Humor in Japan
Author	Jessica Milner Davis (Editor)
Publisher	Wayne State University Press
ISBN	0 - 8143 - 3165 - 3