

2023 Spring Semester

Evolution of Cooperation and Development: An Interdisciplinary Approach

Section 1

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Office Hours	TBA

【Course Outline / Description】

This course examines, through a global and multi-disciplinary approach, some of the fundamental issues emerging from the broad study of human society of which we all belong to. In doing so, we will be covering the fields of anthropology, geography, ecology, economics, psychology, sociology, socio-biology, and political science. In each of our sections we will be discussing the main questions stemming from the respective fields, and explanation of the best answers to those questions to date. More specifically, we will be covering what the social sciences have to say about how and why societies cooperate, and sometime not, and why some societies are developed, while others are less so. Lastly, each class we will be addressing at least one question in relation to Japan/East Asia, as a way in which to better understand the generalizable lessons of that week in the context of contemporary issues.

Section 2

【Course Objectives/Goals/Learning Outcomes】

Upon completing this class, students should be able to:

- Analyze and explain the key features of social cooperation and development, from an interdisciplinary, generalizable perspective.
- Engage in basic research tasks using online databases and other resources.
- Construct arguments, using data/evidence appropriately.

Furthermore, this course is designed to help students:

- Develop thinking, learning and communication skills.

Develop skills in identifying, accessing and evaluating

Section 3

【Class Schedule/Class Environment, Literature and Materials】

Lecture 1	Course Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Agenda: Define social science and explain its importance; why are the social sciences often referred to as the hard(est) sciences?- No scheduled readings
Lecture 2	How to think (and make decisions) like a scientist (Part I)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Agenda: The 'Scientific Method' and use/creation of 'models' for explaining and predicting human behavior; causal relationships + causal mechanisms; qualitative analysis- Readings: CGG Ch. 2

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Lecture 3	How to think (and make decisions) like a scientist (Part II)	- Readings: CGG Ch. 2 Continued
Lecture 4	The Social Evolution of Human Beings (Part I)	- Agenda: Is the human species unique? Can Darwin's theory of evolution be utilized to explain social evolution? How has Japanese society evolved over time? - Readings: Textbook Ch. 2
Lecture 5	The Social Evolution of Human Beings (Part II)	- Documentary: Looking for the Japanese Genetic Roots
Lecture 6	Geography and Ecology (Part I)	- Agenda: What are some of the developments that changed human beings from hunter-gatherers to those which live in complex towns, cities, and metropolises? What are some of conditions that enabled some societies to grow wealthy and powerful, while others stagnated (i.e. 'why all the inequality in the world')? Can geography be an explanation for why Japan was the first state to industrialize in East Asia? - Readings: Textbook Ch. 5
Lecture 7	Geography and Ecology (Part II)	- Documentary: Guns, Germs, and Steel
Lecture 8	The Complexity of Culture (Part I)	- Agenda: What is culture and how can we conceptualize and operationalize it (is that even possible)? Why is Japan considered a 'low trust society'? - Readings: Textbook Ch. 4
Lecture 9	The Complexity of Culture (Part II)	- Continued, no additional readings
Lecture 10	Midterm I review of material covered to date	- Agenda: midterm review group work - Please prepare by reviewing the materials and answering the motivating questions.
Lecture 11	Discussion of material continued; Midterm I	- Midterm I - Mix of multiple choice and short answer
Lecture 12	Post-Exam Exercise: answers and exam evaluated; extra credit opportunity	- Agenda: Post-exam exercise
Lecture 13	Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Multiculturalism (part I)	- Readings: Weiner (ed) (2005). Race, Ethnicity, and Migration in Modern Japan (pp. 1-11)
Lecture 14	Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Multiculturalism (Part II)***	- Documentary: Hafu
Lecture 15	Complex Systems	- Agenda: Why do diverse groups outperform less diverse groups? What is the diversity bonus and how can we measure it? What is the difference between something that is complicated, and something that i

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		s complex? - TBA
Lecture 16	Religion and Society (Part I)	- Agenda: What role (or roles) does religion play in society? To what extent is religion socially and politically salient in Japan? - Readings: Textbook Ch. 10 - Prohl and Nelson (2012). “Religious Contexts in Contemporary Japan”
Lecture 17	Religion and Society (Part II)	- Continued, no additional readings
Lecture 18	Homo Economicus? Decisions under Scarcity (Part I)	- Agenda: Why is economics referred to by many as the ‘dismal’ science (hint: it has to do with food supply and population levels)? How has the world economic system evolved over time? How has Japan’s economy evolved over time? Is Japan’s economic decline a case of too much intervention, or not enough? - Readings: TBA
Lecture 19	Homo Economicus? Decisions under Scarcity (Part II)	- Princes of the Yen Documentary
Lecture 20	Discussion continued; Midterm Review	- Agenda: midterm review group work - Please prepare by reviewing the materials and answering the motivating questions.
Lecture 21	Discussion continued; Midterm	- Continuation of the above.
Lecture 22	Post-Exam Exercise: answers and exam evaluated; extra credit opportunity	- Agenda: Post-exam exercise
Lecture 23	Collective Action Theory and the Study of Social Movements (Part I)	- Agenda: Why did states and governments emerge? What’s the difference between the Japanese state, and the Japanese nation? Why did the Tokugawa regime give way to the Meiji Period? - Clark, Golder, and Golder (2014). Comparative Politics. (pp. 49-70)
Lecture 24	Collective Action Theory and the Study of Social Movements (Part II)	- Continued, no additional readings - State development in the Japanese context
Lecture 25	Political institutions in Japan (Part I)	- Documentary: Pictures at an Election
Lecture 26	Political institutions in Japan (Part II)	- Japan Chapter
Lecture 27	Political institutions in Japan (Part II)	- Japan Chapter
Lecture 28	On the Persistence of Violence in Societies (Part I)	- Agenda: Why are wars empirically rare? Despite the rarity, why do they occur? Prime Minister Kishida has proposed increasing the budget for the Self-Defense Forces, as well as moving forward with constitutional change. What potential effect(s) might this have on Japan’s future and potential outbreak

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		of war? - Readings: TBA
Lecture 29	Course Wrap-Up	- No additional readings
Lecture 30 Dec 12 th (M)	Final Exam Review	- Agenda: Final review group work - Please prepare by reviewing the materials and answering the motivating questions. - Final exam a mix of multiple choice, short answer, and essay.

【Textbooks/Reading Materials】

- All chapters/articles and materials will be uploaded to the course website

Section 4

【Learning Assessments/Grading Rubric】

- **Participation: 10%**
- **Midterm Exam I: 20%**
- **Midterm Exam II: 30%**
- **Final Exam: 40%**

Section 5

【Additional Information】

****SYLLABUS/SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITH NOTICE. PLEASE BE FLEXIBLE.**

IN THIS COURSE, STUDENTS LEARN BY READING AND REFLECTING ON THE ASSIGNED TEXTS, LISTENING TO THE PROFESSOR'S LECTURES, PARTICIPATING IN CLASS DISCUSSION, PARTICIPATING IN FORMAL DEBATES, AND ASKING QUESTIONS--LOTS OF QUESTIONS. STUDENTS CAN EXPECT 8 TO 10 HOURS OF PREPARATION (READING, REFLECTING, PREPARING WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS, REVIEWING NOTES, PREPARING FOR TESTS, ETC.) PER WEEK IN ADDITION TO THE 3 HOUR A WEEK "IN-CLASS" SESSIONS.

****TWO "FREE" UNEXCUSED ABSENCES. ADDITIONAL ABSENCES WILL REDUCE YOUR OVERALL SCORE BY 2.5%. SLEEPING IN CLASS COUNTS AS AN ABSENCE.**