

# KANSAI UNIVERSITY

## JAPANESE STUDIES COURSE OUTLINE 2009

### *Spring Semester 2009*

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Japanese History (The History and Culture of Medieval Japan: Chūsei-shi)  
Japanese Literature (Edo Period Literature)  
Japanese Culture (Basic Introduction to Pre-Meiji Poetry Written in Japan)  
Comparative Asian Cultures Studies  
Japanese Politics (Meanings of Politics for Citizens)  
Japanese Industries and Companies (Knowledge Creation and Competitive Advantage)  
Japanese Computerization and Society  
Seminar in Japanology (Japanese Budō: The Martial Ways of Japan)  
Seminar in Japanology (Geisha: Past, Present, Future)

### *Fall Semester 2009-2010*

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Japanese Religion  
Japanese Art  
Japanese History (Bushidō: The Way of the Warrior)  
Japanese Literature (Up to 1600)  
Japanese Culture (Living in Contemporary Japan)  
Japanese Law  
Japanese Economy (Current Issues in the Japanese Economy)  
Japanese Society  
Japanese Popular Culture (Japanese TV and "Drama")  
Seminar in Japanology (The Japanese Language and Society)  
Seminar in Japanology (The Praxis of Cha-no-yu and the Japanese Language)

### *Course Title: Japanese History*

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(The History and Culture of Medieval Japan: Chūsei-shi)

Spring Semester, 2 credits  
Instructor: Alexander Bennett

#### **Course Description:**

While many scholars disagree on the actual time frame of Japanese medieval history (*chūsei*) this course will look at society and culture in Japan roughly between 1100 and 1600. Medieval Japan was greatly influenced at all levels by the rise in power of the *bushi*, and their distinctive culture holds much fascination for non-Japanese students of Japanese history and society. Social and cultural contributions by warriors are a central theme throughout the course.

However, peasants and those outside the periphery of power were also an extremely important factor in the development of medieval culture. Both facets will be considered in my series of lectures, and by the end of the course, students will have learned about the unfolding of historical processes during this turbulent time in Japanese history, as well as the evolution of many aspects of traditional culture and ideals.

### *Course Title: Japanese Literature*

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(Edo Period Literature)

Spring Semester, 2 credits  
Instructor: Mark F. Meli

#### **Course Description:**

This class will give a broad introduction to Edo-period Japanese literature. While gaining a thorough understanding of the literary history of the whole period, our primary focus will be upon the literature of the townspeople, including the "novels" of Ihara Saikaku and the puppet theatre and kabuki plays of Chikamatsu Monzaemon. We will pay special attention to literature which focuses on problems relating to love, often the love found in the "floating world" of the pleasure districts in the large cities.

***Course Title: Japanese Culture***

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**(Basic Introduction to Pre-Meiji Poetry Written in Japan)**

Spring Semester, 2 credits  
Instructor: A. Stephen Gibbs

**Course Description:**

This course is intended to give students with at least intermediate reading skills the ability to appreciate and enjoy classical verse, and a rudimentary acquaintance with the classical language, as well as the rhetorical devices peculiar to these genres. Both serious and humorous verse will be considered; and participants will be encouraged actively to apply what they are learning in critical exercises. Annotated materials will be supplied, in part demonstrating wherever possible the linguistic links between the classical and modern Japanese language.

***Course Title: Comparative Asian Cultures Studies***

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Spring Semester, 2 credits  
Instructor: Jian Zhao

**Course Description:**

This course is primarily designed to broaden students' knowledge and understanding of cross-cultural relations among East Asian countries. East Asian civilization is a general term mainly covering the cultures of China, Japan and Korea, all of which originally came from the same cultural source but became distinctive with centuries of development. This course will show the similarities and differences between these cultures from a cultural-interaction perspective. Specifically, I will investigate the causes of these cultural phenomena, how they were formed and interacted, and where they are headed. The objective of the course is to provide a basis for understanding East Asian civilization and its cultural heritage and development.

***Course Title: Japanese Politics***

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**(Meanings of Politics for Citizens)**

Spring Semester, 2 credits  
Instructor: Chieko Otsuru

**Course Description:**

This class aims to help students understand how Japanese political culture is formed, and how it influences the Japanese political system, institutions, and policies. It also aims to facilitate an understanding of Japanese politics through the activities of civil society, as well as the political role played by people in Japan including non-Japanese residents.

***Course Title: Japanese Industries and Companies***

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**Knowledge Creation and Competitive Advantage**

Spring Semester, 2 credits  
Instructor: Tomoko Kawakami

**Course Description:**

This course analyzes Japanese industries and companies through case studies. Each participant will be required to select a few Japanese companies according to the criteria explained in class. Students will prepare presentations in English about those companies and their competitors, and related industries. We plan to discuss about ten cases focusing on areas such as management styles, marketing strategies, competitive advantages of Japanese companies from various international viewpoints.

***Course Title: Japanese Computerization and Society***

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Spring Semester, 2 credits  
Instructor: Shizuo Asogawa

**Course Description:**

This course is for non-Japanese students who are interested in diverse aspects of Japanese culture, tradition and society. The topics dealt with in class will focus on traditional cultural issues such as history, literature, and politics, and also science and technology, views of travelers, and natural history; in short, the content will be an encyclopedic overview of Japan and the Japanese.

Comparisons between Japan and other civilizations will be discussed to highlight the nature of Japanese people and culture. In particular, the views of visitors from Chinese and Western cultures who visited Japan from the 16th century to the 20th century will be taken into account. I will also examine the views of Japanese who visited Europe and America at the end of the Edo period and at the beginning of the Meiji era.

***Course Title: Seminar in Japanology***

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**(Japanese Budō: The Martial Ways of Japan)**

Spring Semester, 2 credits  
Instructor: Alexander Bennett

**Course Description:**

The most visible vestige of samurai culture remaining in Japan today is *budō*—the traditional martial arts. Considering the tremendous international popularity of martial arts such as Judo and Karate, *budō* is undoubtedly one of Japan's most successful cultural exports. People around the world practice these arts not only for self-defence or as a sport, but also as a pursuit for spiritual development and enlightenment.

This course will offer the student an insight into the history of the Japanese martial arts with hands-on experience. The first three lectures will be conducted in the classroom and the remainder will be conducted in the gymnasium where students will be given an introduction into the art of *kendō*. Each class will commence with a lecture on an important concept followed by a practical lesson.

Schedule permitting, students will be given the opportunity to take an actual grading examination. For safety reasons student numbers will be limited to thirty people.

***Course Title: Seminar in Japanology***

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**(Geisha: Past, Present, Future)**

Spring Semester, 2 credits  
Instructor: Peter Macintosh

**Course Description:**

In these classes, international students will gain an understanding of *geisha* and their unique culture focusing mainly on Kyoto, the arts, discipline and lifestyle. The course will also serve to dispel many of the myths and misconceptions surrounding the world of *geisha*.

***Course Title: Japanese Religion***

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Fall Semester, 2 credits  
Instructor: Mark F. Meli

**Course Description:**

This will be an introductory class on the religions of Japan. Lectures will be divided between discussions of Shintō, which comes closest to being the “indigenous” Japanese religion, Buddhism, the global faith that began in India and entered Japan starting in the 6th century via China and Korea, and New Religions, which are recent, less orthodox faiths that often mix elements of Shinto, Buddhism, Taoism, and even Christianity to create new forms.

An attempt will be made to cover both the history of these religions as well as their major characteristics—ritual, artistic, philosophical, and doctrinal. In relation to Shintō, issues we will discuss include its ancient mythology, view of nature, and connection to the imperial line, the importance of *matsuri* (festivals) in both ancient and modern times, and the Shintō revival undertaken by Edo-period Nativists. As for Buddhism, we will discuss its historical beginnings in India and basic doctrines, the history of the Japanese sects and the philosophical differences between them, and Buddhism's contribution to the Japanese arts. New religions will be introduced primarily by means of student presentations.

***Course Title: Japanese Art***

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Fall Semester, 2 credits  
Instructor: Gordon Scott Johnson

**Course Description:**

Commercial book publishing began in the early 17th century. Because the woodblock printing method made it easy to combine text and illustration, pictures were an important aspect of publishing. This course will examine the history of book illustration from the early Edo period to the late Meiji period. No background in art history is necessary. The images we will see are like windows into how Japanese artists perceived and depicted daily life at different times.

As we examine changing trends in technique, subject matter and popularity, it will become more and more clear why contemporary manga culture is so rich in Japan, and why there are types and styles for every age level.

***Course Title: Japanese History***

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**(Bushidō: The Way of the Warrior)**

Fall Semester, 2 credits  
Instructor: Alexander Bennett

**Course Description:**

The warrior culture of Japan is viewed with fascination by Japanese and non-Japanese alike, and in recent years there has been a distinct

resurgence of interest in the *bushi* ethics and philosophy (*bushidō*). In many ways, reverence for the ‘Way of the warrior’ is glorified nonsense. Some scholars have even described *bushi* as being no more than ‘valorous butchers’, and beautified notions of *bushi* morality as being overstated if not totally invented.

There is a significant element of truth to this cynical analysis, but I also believe that there are many aspects of *bushi* culture which can add to our lives today. People around the world are searching for ethical anchors in an age when honour, integrity, bravery, sincerity, and self-sacrifice for the greater good are virtues hidden by the tidal-wave of political scandal, corruption, crime, and greed. Reinterpretations of *bushidō* are seen as one possible moral anchor. In this course I will outline the history and components (both fact and fiction) of the seemingly timeless, and in some ways borderless culture of Japan’s *bushi* warriors.

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### ***Course Title: Japanese Literature***

**(Up to 1600)**

Fall Semester, 2 credits  
Instructor: Todd Squires

#### **Course Description:**

This course is for students who have had no introduction to Japanese literature. We will read from major works of Japanese literature from the earliest times until the unification under Tokugawa Ieyasu. Through our reading we will attempt to find common themes that underlie these works and at the same time hone our ability to understand the uniqueness of each work by considering the historical, political, economic and social circumstances in which it was created and received.

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### ***Course Title: Japanese Culture***

**(Living in Contemporary Japan)**

Fall Semester, 2 credits  
Instructor: A. Stephen Gibbs

#### **Course Description:**

This is a learner-centred course designed specifically for students just embarking on a prolonged period of residence. The content consists of a number of projects designed to allow students to devise and discuss working hypotheses concerning the culture that surrounds them in Japan. Another aim is to increase the student’s sense of well-being while living here.

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### ***Course Title: Japanese Law***

Fall Semester, 2 credits  
Instructor: Takeshi Tsunoda

#### **Course Description:**

The main purpose of this course is to give an institutional, historical and cultural survey of contemporary Japanese law and the judicial system. First, I will give a general overview of the modern Japanese legal history and the pre-war Imperial (1889) and post-war (1947) Japanese Constitutions. Secondly, I will outline the present-day Japanese judicial system paying particular attention to courts of law and lawyers, and the recently established Japanese jury system (from 2009).

We will visit the moot court situated inside Kansai University’s No.1-D building, and also go to the Osaka District Court in Nakanoshima to witness a real criminal trial. After surveying these general topics, I will give lectures on various topics related to the Japanese legal culture, including family law, criminal law, and laws regarding religion, etc. I will also adopt a comparative approach between Japanese, Asian and Western legal cultures.

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### ***Course Title: Japanese Economy***

**(Current Issues in the Japanese Economy)**

Fall Semester, 2 credits  
Instructor: Tomoya Suzuki

#### **Course Description:**

Japan is still the second largest economy in the world in terms of GDP. The most remarkable aspect of the postwar Japanese economy used to be its rapid growth. Between 1950 and 1973, for instance, the economy grew at an average rate of 10 per cent a year, doubling its size every seven years. While the moderate growth of the economy continued in the late 1970s and the 1980s, the economic growth slowed down markedly in the 1990s. It was not until 2005 that the economy showed strong signs of recovery. During the long recession, the structure of the Japanese economy changed.

This course is designed to introduce students to the basics of the Japanese economy. Current economic issues of Japan will be surveyed with data. For better understanding of each topic, relevant economic theory will be briefly explained.

***Course Title: Japanese Society***

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Fall Semester, 2 credits  
Instructor: Midori Kawahara

**Course Description:**

This course will provide the participants with a basic understanding of contemporary Japanese society. I will analyze the various characteristics of the Japanese people and their way of thinking. I will also cover major social concepts and psychopathological problems in Japan. Participants will be required to prepare materials and make brief presentations about topics talked about in class. All students will be expected to participate in the discussions.

***Course Title: Japanese Popular Culture***

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**(Japanese TV and “Drama”)**

Fall Semester, 2 credits  
Instructor: Robert F. Wittkamp

**Course Description:**

In this course we will take a close look at Japanese television. Contrary to the opinion of some scholars, TV in Japan is still extremely vibrant. Considering the current international financial crisis, the activities of our free time will take place more and more around or in our houses. And that, of course, means more importance will be placed on TV. It will change its form, but its history has always been a continuous flow of changing forms.

TV is important in the production and maintenance of culture. We will examine Japanese TV on two levels, i.e. its diachronic (historical) and its synchronic (channel and programming) structures. That involves the question of how a history of something that still continuing can be written. We will see how this problem can be solved. Programming is another problem because, for example, what is described in one language with only one term (that means “one reality”) can be separated and described in other languages or cultures with different terms (that means “other realities”). The Japanese expression “*dorama*” (“drama”) is a good example of this phenomenon, and since programmes like news, documentaries, sports or commercials seem to be always in the focus of TV research, we will concentrate on drama instead.

Talking about TV means having to watch it. I will introduce different programmes like *Anpanman*, *Kamen raidā* (“Masked rider”), or *Hachiji da yo! Zenin shūgō!* (“It’s eight o’clock! Fall in!”) Series like these were, and still are, very important for generations. One cannot really claim to know Japan without knowing about them! Anyway, the focus of our course will be on drama in one of its special forms: “*Keiji drama*” (detective dramas like Colombo or Starsky and Hutch in the USA). We are not simply going to watch TV but research, even if it means only the first steps.

***Course Title: Seminar in Japanology***

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**(The Japanese Language and Society)**

Fall Semester, 2 credits  
Instructor: Yuriko Kite

**Course Description:**

This course explores how language is related with society, focusing on Japanese and Japan. I will offer an overview of major issues in the field such as language and context, language contact phenomena (language maintenance and language shift), language policy and planning), language use and gender, age, status, etc. and attitudes toward language. Students will be asked to collect data in a community and use it for presentations.

***Course Title: Seminar in Japanology***

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**(The Praxis of Cha-no-yu and the Japanese Language)**

Fall Semester, 2 credits  
Instructor: A. Stephen Gibbs

**Course Description:**

This is a weekly five-hour practicum in the rite of hospitable meditation usually [mis-] termed ‘the Tea ceremony’, and will be conducted in a fully-equipped Tea-chamber near the Senriyama campus. According to aptitude and appetite, participants may elect only to learn how to comport and enjoy themselves as guests, or also learn how to perform services of Tea, and assist in such. This constitutes a complete retraining in bearing, walking, sitting, and bowing; and such, along with the entirely Japanese environment of the chamber, seems to facilitate the holistic acquisition of greater competence in respect-language (*keigo*), with which many learners have so much trouble in the classroom.