History of Japan II
AEAJ/AHIST 385

University at Albany, Spring 2017
Instructor: John Person, Assistant Professor, Department of East Asian Studies
e-mail: jperson@albany.edu
MWF 10:25 – 11:20
Room: ED 120
Office Hours: Tuesdays 10:00 – noon by appointment (HU 242)

This course is a survey of the history of Japan from the mid-18th century to the present. We will examine the political, economic, social, and cultural institutions of Japan in relation to the everyday lives of its inhabitants. Though scholars typically call these periods the early modern and modern era of Japanese history, the way in which scholars, critics and popular discourse have understood the words “modern” and “Japan” have gone through many changes, as has the basic assumptions that govern the field of Japanese history. We will pay particular attention to these issues as we attempt to formulate our own narratives of the history of Japan throughout the semester.

Course Requirements & Policies

GRADING: Your performance in this course will be evaluated on the A-E scale. The grading breakdown is as follows:

- Attendance and Participation 15%
- Quizzes 15%
- Essay Writing Assignments 20%
- Midterm Exam 20%
- Final Exam 30%

ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY: Students must inform the instructor prior to class if they plan to miss a class. It goes without saying that “attendance” here implies attending to the course in a manner that involves more than mere physical presence. Please notify the instructor before class if you absolutely must miss class due to a family emergency or illness. *A student's final grade in the class will be penalized by a third of a grade (i.e. from B to B-) after his or her fifth unexcused absence, and an additional third of a grade with each unexcused absence thereafter.

CLASS PREPERATION: Students are expected to complete the reading assignments before coming to class. Please bring your reading assignments to class so that you can reference them during discussion. You are also expected to bring a writing utensil for in-class writing assignments. Unless otherwise noted, in-class quizzes will be based upon the reading assignments.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: I request that any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations speak with me during the first two weeks of class. All discussions will remain confidential. For more information, please visit Disability Resource Center. Their website is available here: http://www.albany.edu/disability/index.shtml
ACADEMIC HONESTY: Any use of work produced by another person without proper citation is plagiarism, and is a violation of the academic code of honesty. The instructor reserves the right to dismiss from the course any student that is caught cheating on an assignment or plagiarizing the work of another person. Please see the university’s policies for academic regulations for more info: http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/regulations.html

ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT: You may not use any electronic equipment in class for any purpose, other than engaging in the course (i.e. note-taking, reading course materials, etc.). If you are expecting a call that you absolutely must take, please inform me prior to class.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

MIZUKI Shigeru, Onwards Toward Our Noble Deaths
Andrew GORDON, A Modern History of Japan
KATSU Kokichi, Musui’s Story
*All books are available through the bookstore. All other readings will be provided as PDFs.

COURSE SCHEDULE

*Please be prepared to see changes in the syllabus throughout the semester. I will update you as I update the syllabus.

Week 1:
Jan. 23: Introductions & Syllabus Review

Jan. 25: Introduction to the History of Modern Japan
    Gordon, A Modern History of Japan (MHJ), chapters 1 – 3

Jan. 27: Tokugawa Order & the Bakuhan System
    Begin reading Musui’s Story

Week 2:
Jan. 30: Feudal? Early Modern? Capitalism and pre-Meiji Japan
    Hiraga Gennai “On Farting”

Feb. 1: Writing a History Paper
    Discuss Musui’s Story

Feb. 3: Internal Troubles, External Threats
    John Manjirō, Drifting Towards the Southeast (Excerpts)

Week 3:
Feb. 6: Peer Review Session for Essay Assignment

Feb. 8: Meiji Japan: Revolution or Restoration?
    MHJ, chapter 5; Fukuzawa Yukichi, “Goodbye to Asia”

Feb. 10: Civilization and Enlightenment in the Meiji Transition
    MHJ, chapter 6 – 7
Musui’s Story Essay Due: Saturday 2/11 5pm;
submit as word document by email to jperson@albany.edu

Week 4:
Feb. 13: The lives and deaths of Saigo Takamori
   Mark Ravina, “The Apocryphal Suicide of Saigō Takamori”

Feb. 15: Late Meiji and the idea of a Japanese nation
   Benedict Anderson: Imagined Communities (excerpts)

Feb. 17: What is “Modernity”?
   Stuart Hall, “The West and the Rest” in Modernity: An Introduction to Modern Societies

Week 5:
Feb. 20: Pan-Asian Utopias & Colonial Subjectivities
   MHJ, chapters 8 – 10

   Kaneko Fumiko “The Road to Nihilism” (1923)

Feb. 24: Urban development on the archipelago
   MHJ, chapter 11

Week 6:
Feb. 27: Taisho Modernisms & The discourse of “modern girl”
   Miriam Silverberg, “Modern Girl as Militant”

March 1: Okinawans as Japanese Imperial Subjects
   Alan Christy, “The Making of Imperial Subjects in Okinawa”

March 3: Colonial Subjectivities & Urban development in the Empire of Japan
   Yuasa Katsuei, Kannani (1934)

Week 7:
March 6: The War
   Japan at War: An Oral History (excerpts)
   MHJ, chapter 12

March 8: Experiences of the “end” of the war in the Japanese Empire
   MHJ, chapter 13

March 10: The “Comfort Women” Controversy

Spring Break: March 11 – 19

Week 8:
March 20: Occupied Japan: Liberation or Repetition?
   Bruce Cumings, “Japan’s Position in the World System” (1993)
March 22: Midterm Review

March 24: Midterm Exam

Week 9:
March 27: The 1955 System: America in Japan in the Cold War
          MHJ, chapter 14

March 29: The Invention of Traditions
          Carol Gluck, “The Invention of Edo” (1998)

March 31: Ideologies of Peace II: “Atoms for Peace”

    Midterm exam due: 3/31
    Send exams as a word file via email to jperson@albany.edu

Week 10:
April 3: The Liberal Democratic Party & the Construction State
          Hideo Aoki, “Buraku Culture” (2009)

April 5: The Economic Miracle and its underside
          MHJ, chapter 15

April 7: Global Revolutions: 1968
          TBA

Week 11:
April 10: Showa Popular Culture

April 12: Passover (No class)

April 14: Memories of the War
          Mizuki Shigeru, Onwards Towards Our Noble Deaths (1973)

Week 12:
April 17: Easter (No class)

April 19: Peer Review Session II

April 21: Postwar Histories
          Carol Gluck, “The Past in the Present” (1993)

    Onwards Towards Our Noble Deaths Essay Due: Sunday 4/23 5pm;
    submit as word document by email to jperson@albany.edu
Week 13:
April 24: Pax-Nipponica
   MHJ, chapter 16

April 26: Historicizing Japanese managerial practices

April 28: The Cold War & the Politics of “Area Studies”

Week 14:
May 1: The “Lost” Decade vs. “Lost” Generation
   Saitō Tamaki, Hikikomori: Adolescence without End (excerpts)
   MHJ, chapter 17

May 3: Otaku Culture
   The Moe Manifesto, selections

May 5: Fukushima as History
   Tessa Morris-Suzuki, “Touching the Grass: Science, Uncertainty, and Everyday Life from Chernobyl to Fukushima”

Week 15:
May 8: Review for Final Exam

May 10: Wrapping Up / Hand out final exams
   MHJ, chapter 18

Final Exam Due: May 16 @ 5pm