

# Government/East Asian Studies 296: Introduction to Japanese Politics

Fall 2009

Class: Tuesday and Thursday 9-10:20

Office Hours: Monday 11:00-12:00

Thurs. 11:00-12:00

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## *Overview*

This is an upper-division course on Japanese Politics. You do not have to know anything about Japan, and some background in political science would be helpful but is not necessary. The course is designed to give you a general understanding about the main features of contemporary Japanese politics and a more specialized understanding of a topic of your choice.

While the focus of this course is Japan, an important theme will be international comparison. We will be investigating the dynamics of Japan's political institutions, but we will be doing so with an eye toward broader comparisons with other advanced industrialized countries. Therefore, we will be asking questions like: "How is Japan different from other industrialized countries?" "How is Japan similar?" "Is Japan becoming more or less like other countries?"

Another theme that will be emphasized is change over time. This course is centered on four areas of policymaking: industrial, finance, social, and foreign policy. In each case we will be examining the ways that political, economic, and social actors interact to construct policy. In each issue area we will be discussing how the policymaking process and the policy itself has changed over time. So, we will also be asking questions like: "How has Japan's foreign policy changed over time?" "What is the importance of international forces on Japanese policy?" "What domestic actors drive policy change?"

Japanese politics is usually viewed as being largely elite-driven. Indeed Japanese elites, like elite actors everywhere, have considerable influence on policy construction and implementation. However, rather than taking the usual approach to Japanese politics, which focuses on the "big three" power brokers—the national bureaucracy, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), and big business—this course will take a more bottom-up look at Japanese politics. After a few weeks of background on the important institutional structures of the political system, we will examine three different policy areas—social policy, environment, and foreign policy—with a special emphasis on how citizens are engaged in each issue area. Because there has been a dramatic transformation in Japan's civil society in the last decade since the enactment of the 1998 Law to Promote Specified Nonprofit Activities (NPO Law), much of the focus of the course will be very contemporary, with an eye to how things have changed over time as well as how they vary across issue areas.

## *Objectives*

There are five primary learning goals for this class:

- Understand how government and politics works in Japan
- Develop a comparative perspective when analyzing politics around the world
- Expand independent research skills
- Improve oral presentation skills
- Improve academic writing skills

### ***Expectations***

This is an upper-division seminar, so I expect a high level of student involvement in the course. The course will involve in-class discussions of the reading, a take home midterm, and an independent research paper with an oral presentation about that research. I expect each student to come to class prepared and to participate actively while in seminar.

### ***Grading***

There are three types of assignments in this course on which your grade will be based: Quizzes, a take-home midterm exam, and a final research paper and presentation. This is a writing intensive course, and we will be focusing on writing throughout the course and will put considerable emphasis on improving writing skills.

### **Participation:**

Students are expected to come prepared to class each session. This means having read and thought about the reading material. The success of this course depends in large part on student willingness to engage in the material and push our conversations up to a higher level. As part of the participation grade, students will also be required to contribute to a group presentation about “Japan in the news” one time during the semester.

### **Quizzes:**

An unspecified number of in-class quizzes will be given. The purpose of these quizzes is to make sure that you keep up with the reading and to help prepare you for the larger take-home assignments. I will drop the lowest quiz (this means that you can miss one quiz without penalty). No make-up quizzes will be given.

### **Midterm Exam:**

The midterm exam will cover the broad conceptual material in the first half of the course. It will be a take home exam. Grades will be reduced by 1/3 (e.g. from A- to B+) for every 24hrs or part thereof that the exam is late.

### **Research Paper**

You will complete an independent research paper on the topic of your choice related to Japanese politics. The paper must be 18-20 pages long and use at least ten different academic sources (books, journal articles, primary sources; other sources such as newspaper articles, magazine articles, blogs, etc. can be used but don't count toward the ten). About a month before the paper is due you will hand in a thesis statement, outline, and a preliminary bibliography. Throughout the semester you will be meeting in “research groups” and participate online in themed wikis with peers conducting research on similar topics in order to discuss your progress, share resources, and circulate drafts. In the final week you will present your research to your peers in an academic conference format of themed panels. You will also conduct peer reviews of rough drafts of the paper before handing it in at the beginning of exam week.

I am **not tolerant** of cheating or plagiarism. See the Student Handbook's section on the Honor System for an explanation of student responsibilities, the process involved in prosecuting an Honor System violation, and an essay on plagiarism. [http://www.wesleyan.edu/studenthandbook/3\\_honorsystem.ctt](http://www.wesleyan.edu/studenthandbook/3_honorsystem.ctt). I take the Honor System

very seriously and will take any violations to the Honor Board. I will give you all the tools you need to do well on all of your assignments throughout the semester, so there should be no need for unacceptable assistance. If you have questions about the appropriate way to use or cite a source, please do not hesitate to ask me **before** you hand in your paper.

Breakdown of grade:

The breakdown of the course grade is as follows:

Participation	
In class discussion	10%
Quizzes	10%
Take-home Midterm	35%
Final Project	
Oral Presentation	5%
Paper	40%

Grade Complaints:

Grade complaints will not be entertained until 24 hours after the exam/assignment is returned to you or more than two weeks after the exam/assignment has been returned. If you have a question concerning the grade you have received:

- 1) Wait 24 hours.
- 2) Write out an explanation of your question, including the reasons why you think your grade should be changed.
- 3) Submit your written complaint/question to me, and make an appointment to meet either during my office hours or at some other time.

*A Final Note*

I hope that you will look to me as a resource. I **highly encourage** you to take advantage of my office hours to stop by and talk about issues raised in the course, or other questions you have. I am very open to feedback about the course, and would appreciate you sharing any thoughts you might have for improvement *earlier* rather than later in the semester. I am very excited about this course on Japanese politics, and I hope that we can all have an interesting and productive semester!

*I reserve the right to change this syllabus without notice.*

## Reading Schedule

### **Section 1: History and Structure of Postwar Japanese Government and Politics**

- What are the origins of Japan's postwar political system?
- What is late development?
- How did it effect Japan's political development?
- Who governs Japan?

Sept. 8      *Introduction*

Sept. 10     *Origins of Modern Japanese Politics*  
Reischauer, Edwin O., and Albert M. Craig. 1989. *Japan: Tradition and Transformation*. Revised Edition ed. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company. 145-189.  
Haddad, *Making Democracy Real* (Draft Manuscript) preface, chapter 2

Sept. 15     *The 1990s and the Remaking of the 1955-system*  
T.J. Pempel. "Regime Shift: Japanese Politics in a Changing World Economy," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 23:2 (1997): 333-61.  
Haddad ch.3

Sept. 17     *Executive Branch: Central Bureaucracy*  
Johnson, Chalmers. 1995. *Japan: Who Governs? The Rise of the Developmental State*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company. Ch 6.  
Kingston, Jeff. 2004. *Japan's Quiet Transformation: Social Change and Civil Society in the Twenty-first Century*. New York: RoutledgeCurzon. Ch. 4.

### **Japan in the News #1**

Sept 22     *Legislative Branch: Party System and the LDP*  
Krauss, Ellis and Robert Pekkanen, "Reforming the Liberal Democratic Party," chapter 2 in Sherry Martin and Gil Steel. 2008. *Democratic Reform in Japan: Assessing the Impact*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.  
Robin LeBlanc. "The Potential and Limits of Antiparty Electoral Movements in Local Politics" ch. 9 in Sherry Martin and Gil Steel. 2008. *Democratic Reform in Japan: Assessing the Impact*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.

**Turn in Paper Topic—The "Puzzle" You Want to Answer—and List 3 sources.**

### **Section 2: Voices from Outside of the Center**

- What is the relationship between policymakers in Tokyo and those outside?
- How are policymakers held accountable?
- How are public voices heard?

Sept. 24     *Judiciary*  
Haley, John O. 1991. *Authority without Power: Law and the Japanese Paradox* New

York: Oxford UP. Ch. 1

Mark Levin and Virginia Tice. 2009. "Japan's New Citizen Judges: How Secrecy Imperils Judicial Reform," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 19(6)

Sept. 29

*Media and policymaking*

Krauss, Ellis. 2000. *Broadcasting Politics in Japan: NHK and Television News*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. Ch. 8 and 9.

Takao, Yasuo. 2007 *Reinventing Japan: From Merchant Nation to Civic Nation*. New York, NY: Palgrave. Ch. 6

### **Japan in the News #2**

Oct.1

*Traditional Civil Society Groups*

Ben Ari, *Changing Japanese Suburbia: A Study of Two Present-Day Localities*. New York: Kegan Paul International, 1991. ch. 5

Haddad ch. 4

Oct. 6

*New-Style Civil Society Groups*

Robert Pekkanen and Karla Simon. 2003. "The Legal Framework for the Voluntary and Non-Profit Activity." In Stephen Osborne ed. *The Voluntary and Non-Profit Sector in Japan: The Challenge of Change*. New York: RoutledgeCurzon.

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Oct.8

*Review*

### **MIDTERM DUE FRIDAY OCT 10th at 12:00 midnight**

→ uploaded to turnitin.com by midnight; hard copy in course box by Sat. 11<sup>th</sup> at noon

### **Section 3: Grassroots Politics in Japan—Some Background**

- How do Japanese citizens get involved?
- How do they stay involved?
- How has their involvement changed over time?

Oct. 13

*Political Socialization—Where do activists come from?*

Margaret McKean. 1980. "Political Socialization through Citizens' Movements." In Kurt Steiner, Ellis Krauss, and Scott Flanagan eds. *Political Opposition and Local Politics in Japan*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Pp. 228-273.

#### **Optional Readings**

- Ellis Krauss. 1974. *Japanese Radicals Revisited: Student Protest in Postwar Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Ch. 7.
- Mary Alice Haddad. 2007. "Transformation of Japan's Civil Society Landscape." *Journal of East Asian Studies* 7 (3): 413-37.

- Oct. 15 *Activism Through the Backdoor—Use of Courts*  
Masaki Abe. 2007. “Mobilizing Law against Local Governments: A Recent Trend in Public Law Litigation in Japan” pp. 119-134 in Harry Scheiber and Larent Mayali, *Emerging Concepts of Rights in Japanese Law*. Berkeley: Robbins Collection Publications.

Optional Reading

- Patricia Steinhoff forthcoming

**Japan in the News #3**

- Oct. 20. *Mobilizing at the Grassroots*  
Takao, Yasuo. 2007. *Reinventing Japan: From Merchant Nation to Civic Nation*. New York: Palgrave. Ch. 4.

Optional Reading

- Lawrence Repeta. 2001. “Changing the Guard in the Provinces: A New Platform for Hard Times.” In *Emerging Japanese Politics: New Tools for Citizen Participation*. Washington, DC: Japan Information Access Project, US-Japan Friendship Commission.

**Section 4: Environment**

- What are the key characteristics of environmental politics in Japan
- How do citizens get involved?
- How has their involvement changed over time?

- Oct. 22 Frank Upham. 1976. “Litigation and Moral Consciousness in Japan: An Interpretive Analysis of Four Japanese Pollution Suits.” *Law and Society Review* 10 (4): 579-619.

Optional Reading:

- Jeffrey Broadbent. 1998. *Environmental Politics in Japan: Networks of Power and Protest*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. Ch. 4.

**OCT 27 NO CLASS—FALL BREAK**

- Oct. 29 Daniel Aldrich. 2008. *Site Fights: Divisive Facilities and Civil Society in Japan and the West*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. Ch. 1.

Optional Reading

- Kim Reiman. 2003. “Building Global Civil Society from the Outside In? Japanese International development NGOs, the State, and International Norms.” In Frank Schwartz and Susan Pharr. *The State of Civil Society in Japan*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Tiberghien, Yves. 2006. “The Battle for the Global Governance of Genetically Modified Organisms: the Roles of the European Union, Japan, Korea, and China in a Comparative Context,” *Les Etudes du CERI*. 124 (1-49)

**OCT 29 MANDATORY TALK: Daniel Aldrich 4:30 at EAST**

**Section 5: Citizen Engagement and Foreign Policy**

- What are the key issues for Japanese foreign policy today?
- How has its foreign policy changed over time?
- How do citizen voices get heard and involved?

Nov. 3 *Foreign Policy*

Keiko Hirata, “Whither the Developmental State? The Growing Role of NGOs in Japanese Aid Policymaking,” *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis: Research and Practice* 4 (2002): 165-88.

Optional Reading:

- Richard Samuels. *Securing Japan: Tokyo’s Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007. Chapter 1.
- Leheny, David. 2006. *Think Global, Fear Local: Sex, Violence, and Anxiety in Contemporary Japan*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP. Ch. 4.
- Tiberghien, Yves and Miranda Schreurs. 2007. “High Noon in Japan: Embedded Symbolism and Post-2001 Kyoto Protocol Politics.” *Global Environmental Politics* 7 (4): 70-91.

**Japan in the News #4**

Nov. 5 *Citizen Groups and Japanese Nationalism*

Patricia Steinhoff. “No Helmets”—unpublished ms.

Optional Reading

- Masao Maruyama. 1963. *Thought and Behavior in Modern Japanese Politics*. Translated by Ivan Morris. New York: Oxford University Press. “Theory and Psychology of Ultra-Nationalism” (Ch. 1).
- Isa Duce. 2007. *Civil Society and the Internet in Japan*. New York, NY: Routledge. Ch. 4 (Textbook Controversy)

**NOV 5 MANDATORY TALK: Eiko Maruko Siniawar 4:30 at EAST**

Nov. 10 *Coping with China*

Jeff Kingston, “Nanjing’s Massacre Memorial: Renovating War Memory in Nanjing and Tokyo,” *Japan Focus*. Aug. 25, 2008 [http://japanfocus.org/Jeff\\_Kingston-Nanjing\\_s\\_Massacre\\_Memorial\\_Renovating\\_War\\_Memory\\_in\\_Nanjing\\_and\\_Tokyo](http://japanfocus.org/Jeff_Kingston-Nanjing_s_Massacre_Memorial_Renovating_War_Memory_in_Nanjing_and_Tokyo)

Eamonn Fingleton, “Can Anyone Compete with China? Lessons from Japan,” *Japan Focus*. Sept. 23, 2005. <http://japanfocus.org/products/details/1759>

### Section 3: Citizen Engagement and Social Policy

- What is the relationship between the Japanese state and its society?
- How are citizens involved in social policy?
- How are citizen roles changing?
- How are they meeting contemporary social and political challenges?

Nov. 12 *Social Welfare Policy, Unions, and Freetas*  
Institute of Social Science. 2005. "Youth Employment." *Social Science Japan* 32.  
<http://newslet.iss.u-tokyo.ac.jp/ssj32/ssj32.pdf>

#### Optional Reading

- Estevez-Abe, Margarita. "State-Society Partnerships in the Japanese Welfare State." In Frank Schwartz and Susan Pharr. 2003. *The State of Civil Society in Japan*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 154-172.
- Kume, Ikuo. 1998 *Disparaged Success: Labor Politics in Postwar Japan*. Ithaca: Cornell UP. Ch. 1-2/

Nov. 17 *Minority Issues*  
Apichai Shipper. 2009. *Fighting for Foreigners: Immigration and Its Impact on Japanese Democracy*. Ithaca: Cornell. Chapters 5.

#### Optional Reading

- Chung, Erin Aeran. 2000. "Korean Voluntary Associations in Japanese Civil Society." *JPRI Working Paper No. 69*.  
<http://www.jpri.org/publications/workingpapers/wp69.html>
- Nakamura, Karen. 2006. *Deaf in Japan: Signing and the Politics of Identity*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP. Ch. 1-2.
- Upham, Frank. 1987. "Instrumental Violence and the Struggle for Buraku Liberation," ch. 3 in *Law and Social Change in Postwar Japan*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP.

### Japan in the News #5

Nov. 19 *Gender*  
Haddad ch. 6

#### Optional Reading:

- Yasuo Takao. 2007. "Japanese Women in Grassroots Politics: Building a Gender-Equal Society from the Bottom Up." *The Pacific Review* 20(2): 147-72.

Nov. 24 *The Future of Japanese Politics*  
Haddad ch. 7

Nov. 26 **NO CLASS—Thanksgiving**

Dec. 1     *Presentations*

Dec. 3     *Presentations*

Dec. 8     *Presentations*

Dec. 14    *Wrapping up*

**Rough Draft Posted to course wesfile by Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> —Peer Reviews in Class**

**Final Paper Due: December 21 by 12:00 noon.**