COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This survey course will familiarize students with the social, cultural, political, economic and religious developments in Japan over the past two centuries. We’ll go from the 18th-century kabuki stage, samurai castle, and rural temple school to the university classroom, impoverished countryside, military barracks, and factory floor behind Japanese imperialism. And we’ll arrive in the crowded trains and hip-hop-filled streets of Harajuku in 21st-century Tokyo before the end of our journey. In addition to our textbook, we will encounter diary, newspaper, and magazine entries, as well as novels, plays, scholarly books and articles, manga (comic books), documentaries, letters, government documents, religious texts and dozens of other sources by and about men and women in Japan. The course will equip students with the information and tools needed to acknowledge and understand the vividness and complexity of Japan and its position in East Asia and the world.

REQUIRED BOOKS:

ASSIGNMENT RUBRIC:
Maps (2) [Physical Map and Concept Map] 5%
Analytical Exercise 5%
Discussion Questions (5) 10%
Image Analysis Short Essay 7.5%
Letter to the PM Short Essay 7.5%
Response Essay 7.5%
Imperial Past Essay 15%
Summary 2.5%
Proposal Essay for Research Essay 5%
Research Essay 20%
(including Rough Draft and Rough Draft Peer Comments)
Presentation 5%
Participation 10%
Total 100%
ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS:

Physical map: Map of Japan completed in accordance with the instructions provided

Concept map: A diagram conveying the relationship between the people, institutions, and ideas that characterize the Tokugawa order during the Edo Period (1603-1868)

Analytical Exercise: A worksheet of short-answer questions about the identity, nature, and significance of the 1868 Charter Oath

Discussion Questions: A set of 8-10 questions about the assigned readings and recent lectures that students will complete and bring to class for the purpose of enhancing discussion. The responses to the questions must be typed, but need not be written in formal language and complete sentences. Students wishing to receive full credit for the semester’s discussion questions must turn in 5 of the 7 sets that I will provide during the semester.

Image Analysis Short Essay: A 500-word analytical essay on the themes and significance of the elements in a selected woodblock print.

Letter to the Prime Minister Short Essay: A 500-word persuasive essay written from the perspective of a conservative university scholar that has been asked to advise Prime Minister Hara Takashi (1918-1921) on which recent ideological movement poses the most significant threat to Japan’s development. Identify the ideology, describe its origins and development over time, and counsel the government on how to address the problem.

Response Essay: A 750-word persuasive essay responding to the following statement. “It was inevitable that the Japanese, a feudal people obsessed with war for centuries, would try to conquer the world through violence and oppose democracy with force.”

Imperial Past Essay: A 1000-word informative essay responding to the following prompt. “In the late 20th century, what issues from Japan’s imperial past have drawn the most attention and how have the Japanese dealt with them?”

Summary: A 500-word summary of the relevant article or book chapter selected by the student on the topic that s/he choses for the Research Essay.

Proposal Essay for Research Essay: A 500-word essay that identifies the person or group of people that the student wishes to examine in his/her Research Essay, and describe the sources from which the student will draw to compose that essay.

Research Essay: A 2500-word essay on the history and significance of a contemporary Japanese individual or group that interests the student and demonstrates connections
between Japan’s past and its present. This essay will be based on the aforementioned Proposal Essay for Research Essay, once I have approved it. The Rough Draft and the Rough Draft Peer Comments will also count towards your final grade for this assignment. Footnotes in conformity with Chicago Manual of Style are required for this essay.*

**Participation** : A composite grade comprising attendance (required), participation in class during lectures, discussions, and presentations as well as class content-related questions asked via Blackboard or e-mail.

**Presentation** : A 20-minute presentation that each student will give to the class, based on his/her Research Essay. Powerpoint is highly recommended, and additional types of presentation materials are also welcome. Have fun with this.

* All essays in this course must be double-spaced in 12-point Times New Roman. Essays in this course are graded primarily for the quality of their content and the clarity and consistency of their organization, and secondarily for using correct grammar, word choice, and spelling.

**READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

**INTRODUCTIONS**

Intro to the Course  (August 30)

**READINGS** : None
**ASSIGNMENTS** : None

Intro to the Study of Japan (September 1)

**READINGS** :
1) Gordon, 1-7
**ASSIGNMENTS** :
1) **Physical Map** Completion

**UNIT 1 : JAPAN TO JULY 8, 1853**

The State under Tokugawa (September 6)

**READINGS** :
1) Gordon, ch. 1
2) De Bary, 12-14, 38-40
**ASSIGNMENTS** :
1) **Concept Map** Completion

The People under Tokugawa (September 8)

**READINGS** :
1) Gordon, ch. 2
2) De Bary, 249-250
3) Blackboard Reading 1: William E. Deal, Handbook to Life in Medieval and Early Modern Japan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), ch. 6 or 8/9 or 11/12

ASSIGNMENTS:
1) Discussion Questions

New Ideas and New Challenges Multiply under Tokugawa (September 13)

READINGS:
1) Gordon, ch. 3
2) De Bary, 361-371, 437-441, 447-448
3) Blackboard Reading 2: Chūshingura, 1-7, and 150-180

ASSIGNMENTS: None

Commodore Perry and the End of Tokugawa (September 15)

READINGS:
1) Gordon, ch. 4
2) De Bary, 616-627, 638-645, 657-664

ASSIGNMENTS:
1) Image Analysis Short Essay

UNIT 2: BUILDING A NATION

Revolution from the Top (September 20)

READINGS:
1) Gordon, ch. 5
2) De Bary, 671-681, 725-729, 739-748

ASSIGNMENTS:
1) Analytical Exercise

Revolution from the Upper Middle (September 22)

READINGS:
1) Gordon, ch. 6
2) Naomi 3-95

ASSIGNMENTS:
1) Discussion Questions

Machines of Industry and Empire (September 27)

READINGS:
1) Gordon, ch. 7, (only 94-105), ch. 8
2) Naomi 96-237

ASSIGNMENTS: none

Establishing and Resisting Orthodoxy (September 29)

READINGS:
1) Gordon, ch. 7 (only 105-114)
2) De Bary, 779-797
ASSIGNMENTS:
3) **Letter to the Prime Minister Short Essay** on how to improve one of the following
   a) Political Ideology (you may use De Bary, 890-914)
   b) Gender Ideology (you may use De Bary, 1202-1204)
   c) Religious Ideology (you may use De Bary, 1117-1167)

UNIT 3: THE TAISHŌ FORK
Taishō Democracy and the Masses (October 4)
   READINGS:
   1) Gordon, ch. 9
   2) De Bary, 821-837 or 837-852
   ASSIGNMENTS: None

Japan’s New Politik in Asia (October 6)
   READINGS:
   1) Gordon, ch. 10
   ASSIGNMENTS:
   1) **Discussion Questions**

The Taishō to Shōwa Transition (October 11)
   READINGS:
   1) Gordon, ch. 11
   2) De Bary, 949, 967-979, 805-807
   ASSIGNMENTS: None

UNIT 4: JAPAN AT WAR
Making Asia’s Largest Empire, 1931-1941 (October 13)
   READINGS:
   1) Gordon, ch. 12 (204-214 only)
   2) Blackboard Reading 3: Kang, 85, 111-122, 131-138
   ASSIGNMENTS:
   1) **Discussion Questions**

The Long Finale to the Pacific War, 1941-1945 (October 18)
   READINGS:
   1) Gordon, ch. 12 (215-225)
   2) De Bary: 1007-1015
   3) Read one of the following:

--or--


ASSIGNMENTS: none

The Costs of Total War for Japan (October 20)

[guest lecture planned]

READINGS:
1) Gordon, ch. 13 (only 226-229)
2) De Bary, 1015-1020

ASSIGNMENTS:
1) Response Essay

----------NO CLASS----------October 25------OCTOBER BREAK----------

**Start Reading Blackboard Reading 9**

UNIT 5: COMPLETING DEFEAT, STAGING REBIRTH

The Vacillating Fate of Occupied Japan (October 27)

READINGS:
1) Gordon, ch. 13 (only 229-243)
2) De Bary, 1021-1042

ASSIGNMENTS: none

Victory and Crisis for the New Political System (November 1)
1) Gordon, ch. 15
2) De Bary, 1060-1065, 1068-1072, 1105-1108

ASSIGNMENTS: none

Thinking about the Postwar (November 3)

[video planned]

READINGS:
1) Gordon, ch. 14
2) De Bary, 1178-1187
3) Blackboard Reading 9: Mishima Yukio, *Confessions of a Mask*, trans. Meredith Weatherby (New York: New Directions,
1958), 101-218 [it would be a good idea to start reading this over October Break]

ASSIGNMENTS:

1) Discussion Questions

UNIT 6: THE NEW JAPAN AND ITS PLACE IN THE WORLD

Japan and the U.S. in the late Cold War (November 8)

READINGS:
1) Gordon, ch. 16

ASSIGNMENTS: none

Japan and Its Neighbors in at the End of the Cold War (November 10)

READINGS:
5) De Bary, 1281-1285, 1288,1289

ASSIGNMENTS: none

Japan and the World in the 1990s (November 15)

READINGS:
1) Gordon, ch. 17

ASSIGNMENTS:

1) Imperial Past Essay
UNIT 7: JAPAN TODAY

Contemporary Japan (November 17) ------------ NO CLASS ----------

READINGS:
2) Choose one chapter/article from the following books/journals:
   C) Contemporary Japan - Journal of the German Institute for Japanese Studies, Tokyo 2010-2011

ASSIGNMENTS:
1) Summary (via Blackboard)

Contemporary Japan [continued] (November 22)--------- NO CLASS ------

READINGS:
1) Blackboard Reading 13: Kingston, 146-206
2) Find and read at least 3 sources (articles, books, book chapters, magazine articles, etc.) on the contemporary individual or group you wish to study.

ASSIGNMENTS:
1) Proposal Essay for Research Essay (via Blackboard)

----------NO CLASS----------November 24--------THANKSGIVING BREAK----------

Contemporary Japan [continued] (November 29)

READINGS: Find and read at least 3 more sources (articles, books, book chapters, magazines articles, etc.) on the contemporary individual or group you wish to study

ASSIGNMENTS:
1) Rough Draft due on November 28th

Contemporary Japan [continued] (December 1)

READINGS: none

ASSIGNMENTS:
1) Rough Draft Peer Comments due

Contemporary Japan [continued] (December 6)

READINGS: none

ASSIGNMENTS:
1) Discussion Questions
Using the Japanese Past to Understand Its Present (December 8)
READINGS: none
ASSIGNMENTS:
1) Research Essay due December 9th
2) Presentation

FINE PRINT

Syllabus Disclaimer
This syllabus may be altered at any time by me. Any such changes in this course will be posted immediately on Blackboard, and I will e-mail a revised syllabus that replaces the original to all enrolled students.

Plagiarism:
This term essentially refers to copying someone else’s work without acknowledging that he/she was the source. This can include using the work of a classmate, a scholar, or even one’s own work if it was completed for a different course. The liberal arts education is based on the development of creative and critical thinking skills in students, and plagiarism hinders these goals. If you are unsure about what plagiarism means, hypothetically or in an actual situation, I am happy to discuss it with you at any time during the semester.

Conduct: Be respectful to your classmates and your instructor. Be on time. Cell phones must be in silent mode or off. Each student is encouraged to help me get to know him/her.