



# **School of Global Studies and Collaboration Aoyama Gakuin University**

## **Course Descriptions for Japan Studies Courses**

**2024 Spring ~ Fall**

**Academic Affairs Division  
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## Japan Studies Courses

GSC's Japan Studies Program offers unique opportunities for international students to be immersed in the multi-facets of Japan. The students acquire in-depth knowledge on culture, economy, business, policy, history and geography from accomplished scholars, professionals experienced in policy, renowned artists and entrepreneurs. The program is also designed for Japanese students to acquire the knowledge and skills to introduce their country to overseas in their future careers. Some of the coursework involves excursions or hands-on experiences. This program consists of 16 courses (32 credits) taught in English.

(Courses are subject to change.)

Title	Description	Semester
Surveying and Cartography in Japan	This course is designed as an introduction to the geography of Japan. It will focus on understanding the geographical environment of Japan, studying various disasters in Japan including the policy for disaster prevention and reduction and the roles of geospatial information against disasters. It will also give a lecture on basic methods of surveying and cartography as a tool for the visualization of natural conditions and disaster risks. It includes a small group work and the oral presentation among participants, and also enhances the development of students' skill in making oral presentation and cooperating with others.	Spring
Modern Japanese History: From Samurai Age to Modernity	The course aims to provide students with an overview of the history of modern Japan from the early modern Edo Bakufu (1600-1867) to the end of the Pacific War in 1945. They will encounter some of the most important individuals, institutions, and ideas that have been involved in Japan's rise as a modern power. Particular emphasis will be placed on the global context and Japan's multi-dimensional interaction with other countries. Social and cultural developments will be discussed alongside key political events, offering students insight into not only the emergence of the modern Japanese state, but also the daily lives of people in the past.	Spring
Introduction to Japanese Culture	This course is a general introduction to Japanese culture and society. First, we will examine research methodologies to Japanese culture. Second, we will cover Japanese cultural elements, including art, skill, cuisine, literature, communication, etc. Finally, we will look at some of the major spiritual elements that have shaped modern Japanese culture and society, including Shinto, Buddhism, syncretism, and the Western influences. A variety of films and videos will be used. Students will give several presentations and write a final test.	Spring

Title	Description	Semester
Japanese Economic Cooperation with Developing Countries	<p>How should we eradicate poverty and inequality? How should we achieve peace and justice? How should we guarantee prosperity, health, education, and decent work for all? Japan has been tackling these challenges for over sixty years, by providing aid (Official Development Assistance: ODA) to developing countries with distinctive aid philosophy and unique instruments.</p> <p>This course firstly introduces a basic knowledge about development issues and Japan's ODA policy. Then students are encouraged to think critically about the conventional wisdom on global agendas. The course will be interactive, with the combination of lecture, group discussion, and role-playing game. No prior knowledge is required.</p>	Spring
Traditional Art and Culture in Modern Japan	<p>This course focuses on Japanese traditional culture. It is designed to provide students with information on Japanese traditional culture such as flower arrangement, calligraphy, Japanese cuisine, <i>Kyogen</i>, <i>Kabuki</i> and so on. The course will be taught by artists, performers and experts who are known internationally. Students will have the unique opportunities to listen to their experiences, their thinking and the background as well as to watch performances first hand. Depending on the topic, you will also have hands on experiences in class.</p>	Spring
Economic and Industrial Development Policy in Postwar Japan	<p>In this course features of Japan's post-WWII economic development will be examined. Particular attention will be paid at the concept of industrial policy and institutional aspects of Japan's economy.</p>	Spring

Title	Description	Semester
War Memory in Modern Japan	This class will survey how war memories have influenced Japanese identity and vice versa in twentieth-century Japan. The class will also examine the impact of Japanese and international politics on the relationship between war memories and Japanese identity. Lectures and class discussions are based on weekly readings.	Fall
Introduction to Japanese Politics and Society	The course seeks to introduce students to the fundamental political, economic and social components of modern Japan through tracing its historical development from the end of the Pacific War in 1945 up until the present. Through a comprehensive and global approach, students will learn of the major developments that have shaped Japan on the way from its struggle to rebuild after the war to its rise as a major economic and cultural power in the contemporary world. The course will cover not only the transformation of the state and social systems, but also the impact of these on the lives and culture of the population.	Fall
Issues in Modern Japanese Education	The lecture aims to reveal the special characteristics of Japanese education and society by understanding the social role and function of education and the social factors behind educational issues. Specifically, the lecture will consider social and educational change in Japan through the radical changes in education that have occurred up to the present time from the early-modern period when learning became common throughout society as a whole, to the period of postwar recovery, to the period of rapid economic growth, to the period of globalization. With regard to present-day education, particular attention will be paid to the various issues in education that have accompanied social changes.	Fall
Lifestyle and Society in Japan	This class will introduce students to twentieth-century Japanese History. The main part of this class will consist in a joint reading of the second half of Andrew Gordon's A Modern History of Japan (Third International Edition, 2013). Weekly classes will be primarily lectured based, but some time will be devoted to discussions. The lectures will review the text, highlighting and enlarging on its main points.	Fall

Title	Description	Semester
Cool Japan: Contextualizing Contemporary Popular Culture	<p>This course focuses on Japanese contemporary culture, so called Cool Japan. It is designed to provide students with information about robotics, anime, fashion, music, origami and so on. It will enable the students to acquire the knowledge and skills to present Japanese contemporary culture globally. Experts and artists will present features of 'cool Japan' and show how Japanese contemporary culture and arts can promote cultural understanding. During this course, students will also take part in workshops to gain experience of origami making etc. This will allow students to appreciate the Japanese heart and mind as reflected in contemporary culture.</p>	Fall
Travel and Tourism in Contemporary Japan	<p>Tourism is regarded as the pillar of Japan's economic growth strategy, and one of the main components of the regional revitalization. The students of this class will learn to understand the present conditions of our country's international and domestic tourism, and how they are contributing to the society and the economy. In the class, some of the popular tourist destinations and tourism facilities will be introduced, as well as the major stakeholders in the tourism industry, including hotels, ryokan, transport and tourism organizations. Discussion will also extend to tourism management and policy making of present-day Japan.</p>	Fall
Financial Systems and Economic Development in Postwar Japan	<p>In this course, the process of achievement in reconstruction and development of post-war Japan's economy will be examined. Particular focus will be the several economic development stages in post-WWII era and the special role of development finance, especially Japan Development Bank that is considered to have played a substantial role in Japan's post-war economy for various aspects: implementing World Bank loans for reconstruction, financing leading industries in 1960's, promoting environmental sustainability more recently.</p>	Fall

Title	Description	Semester
New Frontiers in Geospatial Gaming	<p>Google / Ingress I - Beyond Google Earth.</p> <p>Google Earth has changed the educational method of geography. It is a very useful visualization tool, but only for the cyber world. Not for real world. Google has known this demerit on Google Earth, so they have launched the Ingress system on the mobile phone in 2012. The Ingress can make the chances for outdoor actives in the city. This course will explain the state of the Ingress in Japan for geospatial education and tourism.</p>	2nd half of Fall
Advanced Resilient Communities against Disaster	<p>SAFECAST</p> <p>This course will describe the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Powerplant disaster, its causes, its consequences for people and the environment, and the innovative response of the citizens' based environmental monitoring group SAFECAST. It will include lectures, demonstrations, and hands-on workshops (building a GPS/data logging Geiger counter, and logging and mapping radiation data). A reading list will be provided, which will include chapters from relevant books, web reports, and online videos.</p>	2nd half of Fall
Drone Journalism	<p>Conventional photography and video in journalism has been subjective in its angle of view and composition, with much of it taken from the ground, assuming a human presence. However, with the use of unmanned aircraft drones, a collection of cutting-edge technology, journalists have a new set of eyes that can give them a more objective and bird's eye view. In this course, we will learn the principles of photography and video that a camera can record, and by flying the drone ourselves, we will gain the skills necessary for journalists to obtain factual information, and discuss what the next generation of journalism should be like with you.</p> <p>This class is partly conducted in combination with a real-time class using Zoom, etc.</p>	Fall Intensive