Topics in International Politics: Japanese Politics
POL380H1S
Winter, 2020-2021
Format: asynchronous lectures; synchronous discussion at 10am on Wednesdays

Course Description

This course introduces students to the politics, political economy, and international relations of Japan. We will cover the role of political parties, the bureaucracy, and private actors; economic development and stagnation; relations with the United States and regional neighbors. The course places a particular emphasis on contemporary challenges facing Japan, including energy policy and climate change, Japan’s contributions to the liberal international order, and Japan’s response to geopolitical challenges, such as North Korea and the rise of China.

Course Format

Announcements, assignments, and materials related to the course will all be provided and submitted through Quercus. Part of the course will be conducted asynchronously, with readings and recorded lectures provided by the instructor. A synchronous class session will take place every week for discussion and Q&A related to the materials for that week, except during weeks in which a term test will be administered.

Course Requirements

Online and In-class Participation (25%): Each student is required to post one discussion question (~one or two paragraphs) and at least one reply to another student (~a few sentences) to the online bulletin board on Quercus. These should demonstrate clear engagement with the readings for the week. The discussion question is due at 5 p.m. the day before class. The reply is due before the beginning of class. In addition, regular attendance during the synchronous class sessions is a required element of the class (see absence/late policy below).
**Short Essay (25%)**: 1000-1250 words. You can choose one of two options: 1. Attend a Japan-related virtual seminar at University of Toronto during the semester (the instructor will provide a list). After briefly summarizing the presentation, provide a critique while drawing connections to course themes and readings; 2. Write a book review (the instructor will provide a list of books). After briefly summarizing the key arguments of the book, provide a critique while drawing connections to course themes and readings. Deadline: rolling, no later than 4/9.

**Term Test 1 (25%)**: An open book & open note take home test will be administered during the class session on 2/24 (10am-12pm) covering material from the first half of the class.

**Term Test 2 (25%)**: An open book & open note take home test will be administered during the class session on 4/7 (10am-12pm) covering material for the whole class but with greater emphasis on the second half.

**Absence / Late Policy**
I recognize the unprecedented disruptions and challenges created by COVID-19 and online learning: I will be understanding within reason about the challenges you face regarding coursework. You can miss two synchronous classes without penalty: no need to get in touch with me about these. For other excused absences or late assignments, you should communicate with me beforehand unless it is impossible to do so for unforeseen reasons. For the sake of fairness to students completing their assignments on time, late assignments will be subject to a 5% reduction after the deadline has passed. Thereafter, an additional 5% will be deducted for each additional day (short essay) or 10 minutes (term tests) the assignment is late. Online discussion posts must be submitted on time to receive credit. Beyond the two waived absences, unexcused absences from the synchronous class sessions will reduce the total final mark by 5%. Please consult the end of the syllabus for additional relevant policies.

**Prerequisites**
Although several formal prerequisites are listed for administrative reasons, they will not be enforced by the instructor.

**Readings**
All readings will be made available online on Quercus. No purchases are necessary.

**Additional Information**
Please see the end of the syllabus for additional information and resources.
1/13: Introduction & Overview


1/20: The Postwar Political System


1/27: From Economic Miracle to Stagnation


2/3: Political and Economic Transformation


2/10: The DPJ and Abe Governments


2/17: No Class, reading week

2/24: Midterm Test

3/3: Japan in the Liberal International Order


3/10: International Security


**3/17: The Politics of Economic and Social Adjustment**


**3/24: Energy and Climate Change**


Richard Samuels. 2013. *3.11: Disaster and Change in Japan,* Chapter 5 (Debating Energy Policy)


Climate Action Tracker: https://climateactiontracker.org/countries/japan/

3/31: Japan’s Response to COVID-19

Readings will be posted on Quercus.

4/7: Term Test

4/9: Short Essay Deadline
Additional Information

Academic Integrity

All students, faculty and staff are expected to follow the University's guidelines and policies on academic integrity. For students, this means following the standards of academic honesty when writing assignments, collaborating with fellow students, and writing tests and exams. Ensure that the work you submit for grading represents your own honest efforts. Plagiarism—representing someone else's work as your own or submitting work that you have previously submitted for marks in another class or program—is a serious offence that can result in sanctions. Speak to me or your TA for advice on anything that you find unclear. To learn more about how to cite and use source material appropriately and for other writing support, see the U of T writing support website at http://www.writing.utoronto.ca. Consult the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters for a complete outline of the University's policy and expectations. For more information, please see https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/student-academic-integrity and http://academicintegrity.utoronto.ca

Religious Accommodations

As a student at the University of Toronto, you are part of a diverse community that welcomes and includes students and faculty from a wide range of cultural and religious traditions. For my part, I will make every reasonable effort to avoid scheduling tests, examinations, or other compulsory activities on religious holy days not captured by statutory holidays. Further to University Policy, if you anticipate being absent from class or missing a major course activity (such as a test or in-class assignment) due to a religious observance, please let me know as early in the course as possible, and with sufficient notice (at least two to three weeks), so that we can work together to make alternate arrangements.

Specific Medical Circumstances

For 2021 S-term, a Verification of Illness (also known as a "doctor’s note") is temporarily not required. Students who are absent from academic participation for any reason (e.g., COVID, cold, flu and other illness or injury, family situation) and who require consideration for missed academic work should report their absence through the online absence declaration. The declaration is available on ACORN under the Profile and Settings menu. Students should also advise their instructor of their absence.

If an absence extends beyond 14 consecutive days, or if you have a non-medical personal situation preventing you from completing your academic work, you should connect with your College Registrar. They can provide advice and assistance reaching out to instructors on your
behalf. If you get a concussion, break your hand, or suffer some other acute injury, you should register with Accessibility Services as soon as possible.

**Students with Disabilities or Accommodation Requirements**

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have an acute or ongoing disability issue or accommodation need, you should register with Accessibility Services (AS) at the beginning of the academic year by visiting [http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as/new-registration](http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as/new-registration). Without registration, you will not be able to verify your situation with your instructors, and instructors will not be advised about your accommodation needs. AS will assess your situation, develop an accommodation plan with you, and support you in requesting accommodation for your course work. Remember that the process of accommodation is private: AS will not share details of your needs or condition with any instructor, and your instructors will not reveal that you are registered with AS.

It is not uncommon for university students to experience a range of health and mental health issues that may result in barriers to achieving their academic goals. The University of Toronto offers a wide range of services that may be of assistance. You are encouraged to seek out these resources early and often.

**On Campus:** Your college Registrar’s Office, and / or Dean of Students’ Office
Student Life - [http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca](http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca)
Health and Wellness Centre - [http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/hwc](http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/hwc)

**Off-Campus:** Good2Talk - a post-secondary (24/7) helpline (1-866-925-5454).

**Turnitin**

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University’s use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.