

ARTH 385: Art of Japan

Instructor: Laura McCloskey

Term: Fall 2020

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Online

Office Hours: Tuesdays 10-11am online, or by appointment



Hokusai, *The Great Wave*, ca. 1830-32.

Description and Goals

This course will provide an in-depth journey into the arts of Japan. From the earliest pottery finds in the Jōmon period we will then explore Shinto temples, search for meaning in meditative Zen gardens, uncover the “floating world” of iconic *ukiyo-e* Edo prints, and delve into the complexities of spirituality and identity in the Meiji restoration. Finally, we will venture into the exciting intersecting worlds of literature and the visual arts apparent in *manga* and *anime*!

This course meets the Core Global Understanding requirement.

Texts and Readings

There are two books required for our course. Reading assignments are listed in the course schedule. Additional readings may be provided as pdf resources on our Blackboard page.

REQUIRED:

1) Stanley-Baker, Joan. *Japanese Art*. Thames and Hudson, 2014. ISBN 978-0500204252

2) Graham, Patricia. *Japanese Design: Art, Aesthetics, and Culture*. Tuttle Publishing, 2014. ISBN 978-4805312506

Assignments

The following assignments will be due throughout the course. The reflections and discussions constitute your attendance and class participation grades: these assignments allow you to interact with your fellow classmates and make deep connections with the course content. I will provide detailed personalized feedback to your quizzes, projects, and papers.

Here is how your grade will be calculated:

Quizzes- 20% (2 quizzes x 10% each)

Final exam- 20%

Individual reflections- 10% (5 posts x 2% each)

Film/Manga Analysis Essay - 10%

Discussions- 10% (5 discussions x 2% each)

Online Introduction post- 5%

Optional extra credit assignment- 5%

Research Paper Abstract – 10%

Research Paper - 15%

Introductory Post

For your introductory post, post a paragraph about yourself in the appropriate forum on our online discussion board. You may want to include information such as your year at Mason (freshman, sophomore, etc.), major, future goals, and why you are interested in our course.

Individual Reflection Assignments

Prompts for individual comments related to the previous or current week’s lecture, readings, or course progress will be provided each week listed on the syllabus. You must complete all 5 reflections to receive full grade points for this category. Reflections should be at least one paragraph in length (5-7 well-planned, cohesive sentences) and clearly demonstrate to me that you are actively engaging with course lectures, themes, and readings.

Discussion Participation

Prompts for discussions will be provided each week listed in the syllabus. The topics in our course build on each other; taking content week-by-week helps you break it into manageable chunks. There is a good deal of complicated vocabulary in the course – engaging with others while practicing the terms is a great way to build fluency. (It also ensures that you're on target for what will be tested on the quizzes and final.)

Quizzes

There will be two quizzes: one quiz midway through the class and one before the final exam to make sure you are following the chronology, terms, and themes of the course. Quizzes will consist of ten multiple choice questions and two short answer responses. I often also include a vocabulary matching section or map.

Final Exam

The cumulative exam will be a combination of multiple choice questions, term matching, and essays. You **may not** consult notes, books, classmates, the Internet, etc.

Film/Manga Analysis Essay

For this short essay you will choose a movie, *anime* series, literary work, or *manga* that interests you or has historical significance to Japanese culture. A list of possible options will be provided, but you are welcome to make your own choice outside of the suggestions as long as you run it by me for approval. Paying close attention to the visual elements in your chosen work, identify at least five aspects that refer to historical themes, artistic periods, or spiritual/religious imagery that we discuss throughout our course. How does the past influence the present in terms of cultural values and visual symbols? What are the enduring visual elements that define Japanese culture? The essay should be 3-5 pages, 12-point font, uploaded to our Blackboard page.

Research Paper and Abstract

For the research paper you will need to develop and execute an original thesis proposal related to any aspect of our course. You may choose to research an art object, stylistic period, monument, or religious building, or historical event. Your paper should provide a detailed analysis of your chosen subject and clearly demonstrate how your topic is representative of Japanese art and culture. Further details will be provided in the coming weeks. Your paper should be 8-10 pages in length, 12 point font, double-spaced. You should include at least five scholarly sources. The abstract will be due roughly mid-way through the semester and provides a chance for detailed feedback on your proposed topic.

Late Work

- Discussions and Reflections must be completed in class in the week in which they are listed on the syllabus. You will not earn points if you are absent from class.
- Quizzes can only be completed on the dates assigned. If you will be absent from a quiz please make time to take the quiz online or let me know beforehand so that we can reschedule a time for you to complete the assessment.
- Your Essay, Abstract, and Research Paper must be submitted by the dates listed in the schedule. Late assignments will incur a 10% penalty for each day they are late.
- The final exam will take place according to the University calendar. Extensions will only be granted if you have a legitimate and documentable excuse (doctor note, note from an employer, etc.).

Extra Credit

You can earn up to five additional points of extra credit by critiquing a museum exhibit or museum website that focuses on any time period in Japanese art history. Suggested museum websites will be provided on our Blackboard page. This review is due by the last day of class and should be 1-2 pages in length.

What I need in your synopsis:

- What did you do/see and when was it?
- How was it related to images, ideas, or themes we have discussed?
- Briefly summarize the content of the exhibit. You may want to include 2-3 images in your analysis.
- How did the exhibit broaden or improve your understanding of Japanese art?

Grading

I use a 100 total point system for the entire semester.

Grading Scale

A+ = 101 and above

A = 95-100

A- = 91-94

B+ = 87-90

B = 84-86

B- = 81-83

C+ = 77-80

C = 73-76

C- = 69-72

D = 65-68

F = 64 and below

IN = incomplete (You must request an IN no later than two weeks before the end of the semester and be passing the course at the time of your request; deadlines for IN work follow the Registrar's calendar.)

Class Policies

Attendance- The Mason online catalog states: “Students are expected to attend class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation.” Patterns of non-participation will be noted and points deducted accordingly.

Disability Assistance- Mason has a wonderful Office of Disability Services on the main floor of SUB I; if you have a documentable learning disability, I urge you to pay the ODS a visit early in the semester. I am happy to work with you to accommodate your needs, but I will need written documentation from the ODS. <http://ods.gmu.edu/>

Writing Center- If you need some assistance in writing your paper or would like to attend study skills workshops, please do not hesitate to take advantage of the resources on campus. The Writing Center is in Robinson Hall B room 213.

<http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>

Academic Workshops - Academic Workshop schedules can be found in Learning Services within Counseling and Psychological Services on the 3rd floor of SUB I or online. Learning Services is available to both undergraduates and graduate students alike.

<http://caps.gmu.edu/>

Office Hours - I will be available on Tuesdays from 10:00-11:00am. If that time does not work for you, I am flexible – just let me know a day ahead of time when you would like to chat via back-and-forth email. If you have a request for an incomplete or an assignment extension, I will only address those matters via Mason email.

Email and Course Communication - It is critical that you have a reliable way to obtain course information. Please be sure that you check your GMU email account regularly or have your GMU email messages forwarded to your preferred email account. If I need to send a message to you individually, I will send it to your GMU email account. Please note that if you have trouble with your GMU email, you can also use the messaging feature in Blackboard if necessary.

Honor Code

Abiding by the Mason Honor Code is essential if you plan on passing this course:

“Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.”

Academic Integrity: <http://oai.gmu.edu/>

FAQ regarding the Honor Code: <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/>

Useful links:

GMU Registrar Semester Calendar: https://registrar.gmu.edu/calendars/fall_2020/

Course Schedule

Units will be released incrementally in Blackboard to help you pace yourself.
Readings and assignments should be completed by the end of the week (Sundays, 11:59pm).

WEEK	CONTENT AND READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
1 8/24 – 8/30	Introduction; Early Japan: Jomon, Yayoi, and Kofun Art	Introduction Post
	<i>Readings:</i> Stanley-Baker: Chapter 2, Prehistoric Period	
2 8/31 – 9/6	Buddhist Art in Japan: Asuka and Hakuho Periods	Individual Reflection 1
	<i>Readings:</i> Stanley-Baker: Chapter 3, Asuka (through pg. 40) Graham: Katsura	
3 9/8 – 9/13	Buddhist Art in Japan: Nara Period	Discussion 1
	<i>Readings:</i> Stanley-Baker: Chapter 3, Nara (pg. 40-58) Graham: Religious Values and Japanese Design	
4 9/14 – 9/20	Heian Art and Courtly Culture	Individual Reflection 2
	<i>Readings:</i> Stanley-Baker: Chapter 4, Heian Graham: Linkages Between Literary and Visual Arts; Appreciation of Changing Seasons	
5 9/21 – 9/27	Feudalism and the Rise of the Samurai: Kamakura Period	Discussion 2
	<i>Readings:</i> Stanley-Baker: Chapter 5, Kamakura (through pg. 114) Graham: Emphasis on Craftsmanship and Technological Innovation	
6 9/28 – 10/4	Pure Land Buddhism and the Art of Zen	Individual Reflection 3
	<i>Readings:</i> Stanley-Baker: Chapter 5, Kamakura and Muromachi (pg. 114-140) Graham: Ma; Notan; Rituals Order Daily Life	
7 10/5 – 10/11	QUIZ 1	Discussion 3 QUIZ 1
	Review and discussion 2/17; Quiz due by 2/19	
8 10/13 – 10/18	Momoyama Arts	Paper Abstract Due
	<i>Readings:</i> Stanley-Baker: Chapter 6, Azuchi-Momoyama (through pg. 178)	
9 10/19 – 10/25	Tokugawa and Kano Art	Individual Reflection 4
	<i>Readings:</i> Mason: Peace and Stability in Later Feudal Times (online)	
10 10/26 – 11/1	Edo Painting	Catch Up on any Missing Work
	<i>Readings:</i> Stanley-Baker: Chapter 6, Edo (pg. 178-193) Mason: Realism in Edo Painting (online)	

12 11/2 – 11/8	Zenga and Ukiyo-e	Individual Reflection 5
	<i>Readings:</i> Mason: Zenga and Ukiyo-e (online)	
13 11/9 – 11/15	QUIZ 2 Review and discussion 3/30; Quiz due by 4/1	Discussion 4 QUIZ 2
	Contemporary Culture: Revival and Reconciliation Meiji, Taisho, and Showa Art	Discussion 5
<i>Readings:</i> Mason: After Feudalism (online) Graham: Japanese Design		
Thanksgiving Break 11/23 – 11/29		
15 11/30 – 12/4	New Directions: Reflecting on the Globalization of Japan Course Conclusions and Review	Film/Manga Analysis Essay Due
	<i>Readings:</i> Stanley-Baker: Chapter 7, Modern Japan Graham: Early Promoters of "Artistic Japan"	
17 12/5	Last Day of Classes, Course Evaluations Due <i>All Missing Assignments Must be Received by 5pm Today</i>	Paper Due Extra Credit Due
FINAL EXAM You may take the final exam online any time between 12am 12/9 to 11:59pm 12/16. *No extensions will be allowed unless you have a legitimate, documentable emergency that precludes you from taking the exam during the entire scheduled time period above.		

ITEM	DUE DATE
Introduction Post	September 6
Individual Reflection 1	September 6
Discussion 1	September 13
Individual Reflection 2	September 20
Discussion 2	September 27
Individual Reflection 3	October 4
Discussion 3 (related to Quiz 1)	October 11
QUIZ 1	October 11
Paper Abstract	October 18
Individual Reflection 4	October 25
Individual Reflection 5	November 8
Discussion 4	November 15
Discussion 5 (related to Quiz 2)	November 22
QUIZ 2	November 15
Film/Manga Analysis Essay	November 30
Final Paper	December 5
Extra Credit Assignments	December 5
Final Exam	December 9 - 16