

History 356: Modern Japan

Fall Semester 2017
TR 9:00-10:15

Dr. Brian Platt (bplatt1@gmu.edu)
Virtual Office Hours: R 10:30-11:30
(and by appointment)

This course is a survey of Japanese history from the Tokugawa period (around 1600) to the end of the Pacific War in 1945. The course focuses both on changes that preceded Western imperialism in East Asia and those that followed in its wake. Our discussion of modern Japanese history will revolve around three interconnected themes: imperialism, nationalism, and modernity.

I. Course Goals

This course satisfies the Mason Core requirement in Global Understanding, and therefore is designed to train students to do the following:

1. Identify and articulate one's own values and how those values influence their interactions and relationships with others, both locally and globally.
2. Demonstrate understanding of how the patterns and processes of globalization make visible the interconnections and differences among and within contemporary global societies.
3. Demonstrate the development of intercultural competencies.
4. Explore individual and collective responsibilities within a global society through analytical, practical, or creative responses to problems or issues, using resources appropriate to the field.

In addition, this course is designed to train students to do these things:

1. Achieve a close familiarity with the narrative and themes of modern Japanese history
2. Synthesize information provided through lectures and discussion and identify main points
3. Use primary sources in order to understand the past
4. Write argument-driven essays using primary historical sources as evidence

II. Class Meetings

During the first week of the semester, all students will meet together on both Tuesday and Thursday. However, after the first week, I will divide the students into two groups and each will meet only once a week, in one of the scheduled class meetings. In other words, half the students will be in Group 1 and will meet on Tuesdays, and the other half will be in Group 2 and will meet on Thursdays.

The class meetings will be devoted exclusively to discussion. I will divide each group (the Tuesday group and the Thursday group) into five smaller discussion groups (about 5-6 students in each). Before each meeting, the students are expected to do the following: 1) Watch any lectures I have posted; 2) Complete all the assigned readings for that week; 3) Complete the "Level 1 Questions" from the Primary Source Sheet from that week and submit answers via Blackboard. For the first 30 minutes of class, your discussion group will quickly address the "Level 1 Questions" but will spend most of the time on the "Level 2 Questions" and "Level 3 Questions." After 30 minutes or so, the entire class will convene (that is, all the students who are meeting on that day, which is actually half the students), and the individual groups will report on their discussion. Within each discussion group you will appoint a "facilitator," a "timekeeper," and a "scribe/reporter." The facilitator will ask the questions from the Primary Source

Sheet, the timekeeper will make sure that the discussion is progressing on schedule, and the scribe/reporter will be the person responsible for reporting back to the whole class about the group's discussion. **You will have to rotate the jobs of facilitator, timekeeper, and scribe from week to week.** While the scribe/reporter will have primary responsibility to report back to the class, in the ensuing discussion other members of the group will have opportunity to weigh in as well.

III. Assignments and Grading

Attendance: 10%

The attendance grade will be based purely on attendance at the virtual class meetings. Zoom creates a record of who attends each meeting and how long they attend. PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU SIGN INTO EACH ZOOM MEETING WITH YOUR FULL NAME SO THAT YOUR ATTENDANCE CAN BE RECORDED. You will start the semester with a 100% attendance grade, and each missed class will result in a 5% deduction from your grade. If you miss three classes, for example, you will bring your grade down to an 85%.

I know it is possible for you to log on to the virtual class meetings and then do something else for the duration of the class. However, because much of the discussion will take place within your small groups, your absence will be missed. Moreover, you will be expected to write in your weekly journal about the primary sources you read for that week; as long as you have to write about the primary sources, you might as well benefit from discussing them beforehand with your classmates. Finally, the exams will consist mainly of essays based on the same primary sources you are reading together week by week. By participating in the weekly discussion sessions, you are studying for the exams in a very direct, focused way.

Primary source journal: 25%

Each week, starting in the second week of class, you must submit an entry for your Primary Source Journal. Each Primary Source Journal entry consists of two parts. The first part of your journal entry will consist of your answers to the "Level 1" questions on a given week's primary source sheet. Before coming to class you must write and submit answers to those questions. During the class session, we will briefly address these questions and then move on to the "Level 2 Questions" and "Level 3 Questions." We will talk about these questions in class. After each week's class session, you will write and submit an answer to the "Level 3 Questions" from that week's primary source sheet. This, plus your answers to the "Level 1 Questions" you submitted before class, will constitute your primary source journal entry for that week. The format and method of your submission is not yet settled; more information soon.

Exam 1: 15%

Exam 2: 20%

Final Exam: 30%

The exams will consist of short answer questions and essays. The exams will draw from the required readings and from our weekly discussions of primary sources. They will be open-note. You will have only a one-day time window in which to complete them. **They will be posted on Thursday at noon and will be due on Friday at noon.** If you are keeping up with the material and taking good notes, the quizzes should take no more than an hour and a half. The quizzes will be posted on Blackboard, and you will submit your answers through Blackboard.

IV. Course Policies

*** Late policy:** All students are responsible for knowing and adhering to the deadlines for course assignments. Late work will be penalized **one full letter grade per day (including weekends & holidays)**. The only exceptions will be when you have a documented illness or receive explicit, advance permission from your instructor. If you anticipate a problem in completing or submitting your work on time, you must contact the instructor in a timely manner. If you do not hear back from your instructor, you should assume that your work is due on the original date. Regardless of whether or not you have been granted an extension, you must contact your instructor for how to submit late work.

*** Plagiarism and cheating: Don't do it.** It's usually easy to spot and can result in expulsion from the University and/or loss of your degree. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another source without giving that source credit. Writers give credit through the use of accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. A simple listing of books, articles, and websites is not sufficient.

Student writers are often confused as to what should be cited. Some think that only direct quotations need to be credited; this is incorrect. While direct quotations do need citations, so do paraphrases and summaries of opinions or factual information formerly unknown to the writers or which the writers did not discover themselves. Exceptions to this rule include factual information which can be obtained from a variety of sources—what has been called common knowledge—or the writers' own insights or findings from their own field research. What constitutes common knowledge can sometimes be precarious; what is common knowledge for one audience may be so for another. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, or about when or how to properly cite a source, ask me! For more information see this very helpful [website](#).

*** Academic accommodations.** If you are a student who has a documented condition that warrants academic accommodations, please let me know. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the Office of Disability Services. (<http://ods.gmu.edu/>)

*** Electronic communication.** I am best reached by email (see address above). Note: I usually check email during normal business hours, namely M-F, 8 am-5pm. Please allow 24-48 hours for a reply to an email request or inquiry (excluding weekends). Be sure to note your course number in your email subject line and include both your first and last name in your signature. For general advice on the best way to communicate via email, see: <http://mleddy.blogspot.com/2005/01/how-to-e-mail-professor.html>

There is also a general discussion board for the entire course – “Questions and Issues” – where you can post general questions about the course requirements, course materials, etc.

Please stop by during my **virtual office hours** on Thursdays, 10:30-11:30 a.m. No appointment necessary! Just log into our blackboard site, click “Course Tools,” then “Blackboard Collaborate Ultra” and then select “Course Room.” Please have your video and audio on. I will be waiting to answer any questions or discuss course material.

Resources:

- For help with online learning, check out GMU Learning Services at this [link](#).
- If you're struggling with mental health issues, reach out to [CAPS](#) – they offer a range of free help for students (including after-hours crisis services). For more resources focused on emotional and mental well-being, click on this [link](#).
- Issues with technology? Check out the resources provided at this [link](#). If you can't find the answers there, you should reach out to the ITS Support Center for help (their contact information is [here](#)). Remember: completion of assignments is your responsibility and technological issues do not constitute an excuse.
- Need assistance with writing assignments for this class? Make an appointment to work with a tutor online through the Writing Center (instructions for how to schedule a session are found [here](#)).

V. Required Texts

De Bary, Gluck, and Tiedemann, eds., *Sources of Japanese Tradition, vol. 2* (excerpts posted on Blackboard site)

Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*

Katsu Kokichi, *Musui's Story*

Anne Walthall, ed., *The Human Tradition in Modern Japan*

Additional readings posted on Blackboard as pdfs, in "Weekly Lessons" folder

NOTE: This syllabus is subject to revision as the semester proceeds. Announcements of changes will be made online and during class meetings. Students are responsible for being aware of any changes.

VI. Schedule

Additional documents posted on Blackboard will be marked by an asterisk

Week One (Aug. 24-28)

Tues., Aug. 25: Course Intro

Thurs., Aug. 27: Introduction to Japan and its pre-Tokugawa History

Read: Gordon, pp. 3-9
Walthall, ch.1 (on Shinanomiya Tsuneko)

Week 2 (Aug 31-Sept 4): Building The Tokugawa Order

Read: Gordon, pp. 11-21
Walthall, ch. 2 (on Mori Yoshiki)
"Code for Warrior Households" (pp. 12-14)
"Code for the Imperial Court and Court Nobility" (pp. 14-18)
"The Story of the Miike Sword" (pp. 25-26)
"Summary of Japanese Matters" (pp. 156-162)
"Statement on the Expulsion of the Bateren" (pp. 171-174)
"The Way of the Samurai" (pp. 192-194)

Week Three (Sept. 7-11): Social Change and the Samurai

Read: Gordon, pp. 22-34
"Some Observations About Merchants" (pp. 317-320)
"What the Seasons Brought to the Almanac Maker"
Musui's Story
"The Akō Vendetta Dramatized" (pp. 470-473)

Week Four (Sept. 14-18): What to do with the red-haired barbarians?

Read: Gordon, pp. 35-51
 “Kamo no Mabuchi (pp. 489-496)
 “For a Merit System in Government” (pp. 235-237)
 “The Law of the Universe: Commodities Transactions” (pp. 434-436)
 “Report on an Autopsy” (pp. 371-375)
 “Ōshio’s Protest (p. 560)
 Aizawa Seishisai’s “New Theses” (pp. 621-627)
 Tokugawa Nariaki’s letter to the Bakufu
 Ii Naosuke’s letter to the Bakufu

Week Five (Sept. 21-25): The Fall of the Bakufu

Read: Gordon, pp. 51-59
 Yoshida Shōin (pp. 651-657)
 Subjugation Edict, Resignation Letter, Edict to Diplomats (pp. 670-671)
 “Treaty of Amity and Commerce”

***EXAM 1: Posted on Thursday, Sept. 24 at noon, due Friday, Sept. 25, at noon**

Week Six (Sept. 28-Oct. 2): The Meiji Restoration and “Civilization and Enlightenment”

Read: Gordon, pp. 61-75
 From “Charter Oath” to “Kido’s Observations” (pp. 671-680)
 “Unity of Rites and Rule” (pp. 793-794)
 “Kido Takayoshi and Itō Hirobumi on Universal Education” (pp. 758-760)
 “Civilization and Enlightenment” (pp. 694-717)

Week Seven (Oct. 5-9): Consolidation at Home, Expansion Abroad

Read: Gordon, pp. 76-89
 Walthall, ch. 4 (on the Ishizaka family)
 Walthall, ch. 6 (on Jahana Noboru)
 “Debating a National Assembly” (pp. 722-727)
 Fukuzawa Yukichi’s “Leaving Asia”

Week Eight (Oct. 12-16): Nation-State and Empire

Read: Gordon, pp. 89-103, 113-137
 Walthall, ch. 3 (on Nishimiya Hide)
 “Political Parties” (pp. 734-739)
 “Bestowing the Constitution on the People” (pp. 39-742)
 “The Meiji Constitution” (pp. 745-748)
 “The Imperial Rescript on Education” (p. 780)

Week Nine (Oct. 19-23): Modernization and Identity

Read: Gordon, pp. 103-112

“Okakura Kakuzō: Aesthetic Pan-Asianism” (pp. 811-816)
 “Japan and the World in Cultural Debate” (pp. 1162-1171)

***EXAM 2: Posted on Thursday, Oct. 26 at noon, due Friday, Oct. 27, at noon**

Week Ten (Oct. 26-30): Social and Political Changes in the Taisho era (1912-1926)

Read: Gordon, pp. 139-160 and 161-172
 Walthall, ch. 8 (on Matsuura Isami)
 “Yoshino Sakuzō” (pp. 837-848)
 “Kaneko Fumiko” (pp. 915-920)

Week Eleven (Nov. 2-6): Modern Girls and Empire

Read: Gordon, pp. 172-180
 Walthall, ch. 5 (on Hatoyama Haruko)
 Walthall, ch. 9 (on Yoshiya Nobuko)
 “Hiratsuka Raichō and the Bluestocking Society” (pp. 1202-1204)
 “The Impact of World War I” (pp. 983-986)
 “Peaceful Cooperation Abroad” (pp. 886-889)
 “Yanagi Muneyoshi and the Kwanghwa Gate” (pp. 816-820)

Note: The university is closed for election day on Nov. 2. All students will therefore meet, via Zoom, on Thursday the 4th.

Week Twelve (Nov. 9-13): Economic Depression and Radical Nationalism

Read: Gordon, pp. 181-191
 “The Rise of Revolutionary Nationalism” (pp. 948-967)
 “Plan to Occupy Manchuria” and “The Economic Need for Expansion” (pp. 986-991)

Week Thirteen (Nov. 16-20): Mobilizing for War

Read: Gordon, pp. 191-209
 “The Tenkō Phenomenon” (pp. 940-947)
 “National Mobilization” (pp. 992-995)
 “The Decision for War With the U.S.” (pp. 1007-1010)

Week Fourteen (Nov. 23-27): The Meaning of War

Read: Gordon, pp. 209-219
 Sources: pp. 995-1015 (“Konoe Fumimaro,” “The Imperial Rule Assistance Association,” “Spiritual Mobilization” and “Economic Mobilization,” “The War’s Goals” and “The Greater East Asia Conference”)

Note: The university is closed for Thanksgiving on Nov. 26. All students will therefore meet, via Zoom, on Tuesday the 24th.

Week Fifteen (Nov. 30-Dec. 4): War's End

Read: Gordon, pp. 219-223

Walthall ch. 11 (on Yokoi Shoichi)

Sources: "Defeat" (pp. 1015-1017)

The final exam will be distributed on December 4 and will be due, via Blackboard, on December 11 at noon.

Primary source sheet

You may not be able to answer all the questions for any given source and you will have more specific information for some sources than others. Just do as much as you can.

Level 1 Questions: Basic information about the source:

What is this source? (*Give the title AND the genre— is it a letter? A portrait? A law? A poem? An essay?*)

Who created this source? (*Give the name if you have it and also what kind of person or people created it -- A poet? A government official? A farmer? The leader of an opposition movement?*)

When did he/she/they create the source?

What event(s) is the creator reporting, or what issue does it address?

Who was the intended audience?

Level 2 Questions: Meaning of specific source(s) assigned for the week?

(these will be different from source to source)

Level 3 Questions: Significance and Relevance to Course

How do you think the source relates to the issues we're dealing with in class? Does it help illustrate a point that was addressed in the textbook or the lectures?