

Japanese Culture
The Intersection of Tradition and Modernity
CARD 260/261

What is the role of tradition in a world of ultra-modern cities, super-fast transportation, instantaneous global communication, and futuristic technology? This course will explore the relationship between Japan's past and present by examining its efforts to embrace modernity while remaining distinctly "Japanese." After exploring the relationship between tradition and modernity in the classroom, we will experience the synthesis of traditional and modern culture by visiting various cultural sites in and around Tokyo, Nagoya, Kyoto, Hiroshima and the Kii Peninsula.

Learning Outcomes

Through a combination of readings, lectures, class discussions, and their actual experiences in Japan, students will acquire:

1. a framework for exploring the concept of cultural identity.
2. a general understanding of Japanese history with a particular focus on the historical factors that contributed to the development of modern Japanese identity.
3. perspectives and skills that promote cultural exploration and intercultural understanding.

Spring Semester Grades

- 20% Class Participation
- 20% Weekly Reflections (10x2%)
- 10% Destination Exploration
- 10% Food for Thought
- 30% Final Paper
- 10% Final Paper Presentation

May Term Grades

- 50% Participation
- 50% BodhiBlog

Course Texts

- Roger J. Davies, *Japanese Culture: The Religious and Philosophical Foundations*
- Leonard Koren, *Wabi Sabi for Artists, Designers, Poets and Philosophers*
- Christopher Goto-Jones, *Modern Japan: A Very Short Introduction*
- Sean Michael Wilson/Akiko Shimojima, *Bushido (Graphic Novel): The Soul of Japan*
- William M. Tsutsui, *Japanese Popular Culture and Globalization*

Spring Semester Assignments

Weekly Reflections: After completing the assigned readings for each class, you will write a one-page (250-word minimum) reflection paper on an issue that you would like to explore further in our class discussion, your final paper and/or during the trip to Japan. You will receive a full 2% for each reflection that you turn in as long as it is turned in prior to the class and demonstrates a sincere attempt to engage with the readings. In short, those who turn in at least ten reflections over the course of the semester will receive the full 20% for this assignment.

Destination Exploration: Before the trip, we will work collaboratively to compile some information about the places we will visit. During our first meeting, each student will sign up for one site to do research on; in subsequent meetings, students will take turns giving short (5-minute) presentations on the destinations they researched with a particular focus on how the site in question represent the intersection of tradition and modernity. For details regarding the assignment requirements see the Destination Exploration Rubric below.

Food for Thought: This assignment is similar to Destination Exploration except that each week a student will make a presentation on a particular type of Japanese food. Your presentation should provide a description of the dish in question as well as a discussion of its cultural significance, such as whether it is an indigenous dish or one that originally came from another culture. For details regarding the assignment requirements see the Food for Thought Rubric below.

Final Paper/Class Presentation: Your final assignment for the classroom portion of the course will be a 6-page essay (1500-word minimum) that develops your own perspective on the intersection of tradition and modernity in contemporary Japan. Your paper should include appropriate references to at least five academic (i.e. peer-reviewed) sources, which may include readings that were assigned for the course. During the final class session, you will make a short (five-minute maximum) presentation on your paper, after which your fellow travelers will have the opportunity to ask you a few questions about your thesis.

May Term Requirements

Participation (50%): All group activities during the trip are considered “class” meetings, so your attentive participation is required. Your conduct on the trip will also be reflected in your Participation mark, so please remember that while we are in Japan you are an ambassador of both North Central College and the United States. Japan is a country with a strong sense of proper social behavior, and while they will not expect you to know all of their social norms, you should do your best to respect Japanese behavior patterns. For example, you may notice that people tend to be quiet in public, so while it is okay to talk in hotel lobbies and on trains, you should keep the volume to a reasonable level. In addition to respecting Japanese social norms, please be considerate towards other members of our group, both individually and collectively. For example, if we have to leave the hotel early in the morning to catch a train, make sure that you are in the lobby at the appointed time: the group will not be happy if we miss our train because you slept through your alarm! Think about our group as a big family—and try to avoid conduct that will make it dysfunctional.

BodhiBlog (50%): During the trip, you will be required to maintain a blog of your travels in Japan (we recommend using a free platform such as Tumblr, Weebly, or WordPress). The blog should include thoughtful reflections on the sites that we visit, with a particular emphasis on experiences that highlight the intersection of tradition and modernity. You will have approximately one week after we return from Japan to do additional work on your blog, such as adding photos from the trip, revising your reflections, etc. For additional details, see the BodhiBlog Rubric below.

Contact Information

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Spring Semester Syllabus (Mondays 6:30-8:05 PM)

1/10	Introduction • Shinto: The Indigenous Tradition? <i>Japanese Culture: The Religious and Philosophical Foundations</i> (JC): 13-53 Destination Exploration (Hoffert: Koyasan) & Food for Thought (Matsubara: Sushi)
1/17	MLK Holiday
1/24	<i>Shinbutsu-Shugo: The Synthesis of Buddhism and Shinto</i> JC: 61-72 • Shinto and Buddhism • Mt. Hiei • Iitokodori DE & F4T
1/31	Zen and the Development of Japanese Aesthetics JC: 79-97 • <i>Wabi Sabi</i> : 7-36 • Japanese Mascots • John Oliver's Mascots DE & F4T
2/7	The Japanese Tea Ceremony <i>Wabi Sabi</i> : 40-72 • <i>Bushido: The Soul of the Samurai</i> (Sections 1-4) DE & F4T
2/14	Confucianism in the Tokugawa Shogunate JC: 101-107 • <i>Bushido: The Soul of the Samurai</i> (Sections 5-17) DE & F4T
2/21	Japan's Encounter with the Modern World <i>Modern Japan</i> : 1-41 • JC, 113-123 DE & F4T
2/28	Revolution: Embracing Modernity <i>Modern Japan</i> : 42-61 • Aspects of Hybrid Consciousness • Toyota Production System DE & F4T
3/7	Overcoming and Overcome by Modernity: Japan at War <i>Modern Japan</i> : 62-88 • <i>Barefoot Gen</i> (view in library or at public screening) DE & F4T
3/14	SPRING BREAK
3/21	Economic Miracles and the Making of a Postmodern Society <i>Modern Japan</i> : 89-123 • Shinkansen DE & F4T
3/28	Tradition and Modernity: The Ongoing Creation of Japanese Identity <i>Modern Japan</i> : 124-149 • Chinmoku • Gambari • Senpai-Kohai DE & F4T
4/4	The Development of Japanese Pop Culture <i>Japanese Popular Culture and Globalization</i> : 1-34 • Robots (to 19m28s) DE & F4T
4/11	The Globalization of Japanese Pop Culture <i>Japanese Popular Culture and Globalization</i> : 35-71 • Harajuku • Maid Cafe DE & F4T
4/18	Tales from the Dark Side Dogs and Demons: 358-385 • Rent-A-Family • Personal Robots DE & F4T
4/25	Final Paper Presentations Brief presentations of each student's final paper (with a strict 5-minute time limit)

Itinerary for the May Term Japan Trip

<u>Day 1</u> 5/10	Depart for Japan
<u>Day 2</u> 5/11	Arrive in Tokyo Narita International Airport/Check in to Hotel
<u>Day 3</u> 5/12	Tokyo Edo-Tokyo Museum ☺ Kokugikan/Chanko Lunch ☺ Sensoji ☺ Akihabara
<u>Day 4</u> 5/13	Tokyo ► Nagoya Imperial Palace ☺ Yasukuni Shrine ☺ Harajuku
<u>Day 5</u> 5/14	Nagoya Toyota Techno Museum ☺ Nagoya Gakuin University ☺ Toyota Lecture ☺ Atsuta Shrine
<u>Day 6</u> 5/15	Nagoya ► Kii Katsura Nagoya Castle ※ Onsen (Hot Springs)
<u>Day 7</u> 5/16	Kii Katsura ► Osaka Kumano Kodo ☺ Nachi Falls ※ Tsutenkaku/Shinsekai
<u>Day 8</u> 5/17	Osaka ► Kyoto ※ Sanjusang Gendo ☺ Kiyomizudera ☺ Gion (Hanami-koji Street, Yasaka Shrine)
<u>Day 9</u> 5/18	Kyoto Toji ☺ Fushimi Inari Shrine
<u>Day 10</u> 5/19	Kyoto Kinkakuji ☺ Ryoanji
<u>Day 11</u> 5/20	Kyoto ► Koyasan ※ Shukubo (Temple-Inn) ☺ Kongubuji/Garan ☺ Okunoin Cemetery Night Tour
<u>Day 12</u> 5/21	Koyasan ► Osaka Goma Fire Ritual ☺ Reihokan Museum ※ Dotonbori
<u>Day 13</u> 5/22	Osaka ► Nara ※ Todaiji ☺ Kofukuji ☺ Kasuga Grand Shrine
<u>Day 14</u> 5/23	Nara ► Tokyo Free Day Options: Sumo / Ghibli Museum / Yanesen (Old Tokyo District)
<u>Day 15</u> 5/24	Tokyo Free Day Options: Sumo / Ghibli Museum / Yanesen (Old Tokyo District)
<u>Day 16</u> 5/25	Return to Chicago

Destination Exploration Rubric

	<u>Unsatisfactor</u> yo-.65	<u>Satisfactory</u> .75	<u>Good</u> .85	<u>Excellent</u> .95	MARK
CONTENT	The destination's significance w.r.t. tradition/modernity is inadequately discussed.	The destination's significance w.r.t. tradition/modernity is minimally discussed.	The destination's significance w.r.t. tradition/modernity is effectively discussed.	The destination's significance w.r.t. tradition/modernity is insightfully discussed.	5
MULTIMEDIA	No audio/visual aids are used to enhance the presentation.	The presentation is minimally enhanced by relevant images, videos, etc.	Images, videos, etc. are effectively arranged in a PowerPoint (or similar) presentation.	The content is greatly enhanced by a creative PowerPoint (or similar) presentation.	2.5
DELIVERY	Not adequately prepared for the presentation.	The content is read from notes and/or poorly delivered.	The content is clearly presented with good eye contact, body language, etc.	Strong presentation skills resulted in a high level of audience engagement.	2.5
TOTAL GRADE					10

Food for Thought Rubric

	<u>Unsatisfactor</u> yo-.65	<u>Satisfactory</u> .75	<u>Good</u> .85	<u>Excellent</u> .95	MARK
CONTENT	The assigned food is inadequately researched.	Basic details about the assigned food are adequately presented.	The assigned food is clearly described with some discussion of its cultural significance.	The assigned food is clearly described with an insightful discussion of its cultural significance.	5
MULTIMEDIA	No audio/visual aids are used to enhance the presentation.	The presentation is minimally enhanced by relevant images, videos, etc.	Images, videos, etc. are effectively arranged in a PowerPoint (or similar) presentation.	The content is greatly enhanced by a creative PowerPoint (or similar) presentation.	2.5
DELIVERY	Not adequately prepared for the presentation.	The content is read from notes and/or poorly delivered.	The content is clearly presented with good eyecontact, body language, etc.	Strong presentation skills resulted in a high level of audience engagement.	2.5
TOTAL GRADE					10

Class Presentation Rubric

	<u>Unsatisfactor</u> yo-.65	<u>Satisfactory</u> .75	<u>Good</u> .85	<u>Excellent</u> .95	MARK
CONTENT	The argument and/or thesis is unclear.	Your perspective on the intersection of tradition and modernity is adequately presented.	Your perspective on the intersection of tradition and modernity is clearly presented.	You develop a significantinsight on the intersection of tradition of modernity.	2
MULTIMEDIA	No audio/visual aids are used to enhance the presentation.	The presentation is minimally enhanced by relevant images, videos, etc.	Images, videos, etc. are effectively arranged in a PowerPoint (or similar) presentation.	The content is greatly enhanced by a creative PowerPoint (or similar) presentation.	1
DELIVERY	Not adequately prepared for the presentation.	The content is read from notes and/or poorly delivered.	The content is clearly presented with good eye contact, body language, etc.	Strong presentation skills resulted in a highlevel of audience engagement.	1
TOTAL GRADE				Hoffert + Matsubara + Peer Average Total Grade	4+4 +2 10

BodhiBlog Rubric

	<u>Unsatisfactor</u> yo-.65	<u>Satisfactory</u> .75	<u>Good</u> .85	<u>Excellent</u> .95	MARK
CONTENT	There are no significant discussions of the relationship between tradition and modernity.	There is minimal discussion of the relationship between tradition and modernity.	There are a few significant discussions of the relationship between tradition and modernity.	There are many significant discussions of the relationship between tradition and modernity.	_____ 20
MULTIMEDIA	There is nothing to enhance or personalizethe blog.	There is some use of media (images, video, links, etc.), but the blog is primarily text-based.	Images, video, links, etc. increase the blog's visual appeal and enhance its content.	The use of various media greatly increases the blog's visual appeal and enhances its content.	_____ 10
FREQUENCY/ LENGTH	< 300 words/day	300-400 words/day	400-500 words/day	>500 words/day	_____ 10
WRITING QUALITY	Poorly written with numerous technicalerrors.	Reasonably well written with some technical errors.	Very well written and largely free of technical errors.	Entries are exceptionally well written.	_____ 10
TOTAL GRADE					50

Destination Exploration Sign-Up Sheet

- _____ **Tokyo: Sensoji**
- _____ **Tokyo: Akihabara**
- _____ **Tokyo: Imperial Palace**
- _____ **Tokyo: Yasukuni Shrine**
- _____ **Nagoya: Toyota Techno Museum**
- _____ **Nagoya: Nagoya Castle**
- _____ **Nagoya: Atsuta Shrine**
- _____ **Kii Katsuura: Nachi Taisha**
- _____ **Osaka: Tsutenkaku/Doutonbori**
- _____ **Kyoto: Gion**
- _____ **Kyoto: Fushimi Inari Shrine**
- _____ **Kyoto: Kinkakuji**
- _____ **Kyoto: Ryoanji**

Food for Thought Sign-Up Sheet

- _____ **Sashimi**
- _____ **Tempura**
- _____ **Yakitori**
- _____ **Miso Soup**
- _____ **Tsukemono**
- _____ **Udon**
- _____ **Soba**
- _____ **Sukiyaki**
- _____ **Ramen**
- _____ **Kaiseki**
- _____ **Curry Rice**
- _____ **Tonkatsu**
- _____ **Okonomiyaki**
- _____ **Wagashi**
- _____ **Chankonabe**
- _____ **Takoyaki**
- _____ **Kushikatsu**
- _____ **Donburi**
- _____ **Onigiri**
- _____ **Gyoza**
- _____ **Yakisoba**
- _____ **Japanese Crepe**