

ASH 3442: Modern Japan

Instructor: Prof. James Gerien-Chen

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Class Meeting Times: Tuesdays 1:55–2:45; Thursdays 1:55–3:50

Classroom: Keene-Flint 119

Office Hours: Tuesdays 3–5, and Thursdays 4–5 (Keene-Flint 203)

Course Description

This course charts the history of Japan over roughly the last four hundred years as it transformed from a feudal, semi-centralized polity under samurai rule ca. 1600 to a global economic superpower at the turn of the millennium. How did people experience and understand the upheavals brought by Japan's modern revolution, emergence as the world's first non-Western, modern empire, total war in the Asia-Pacific, and postwar reemergence and economic resurgence? Using a variety of primary sources and media, we will study the history of modern Japan in local, national, regional, and global contexts. We will see how individuals experienced and made sense of these historical processes across lines of gender, class, and ethnicity. Finally, we will evaluate and debate how historians have analyzed Japan's modern history.

Course Objectives and Outcomes

This upper-level course will pursue several inter-related objectives. You will:

- Think about Japan's modern history, identifying key themes, events, figures, and narrating change and continuity over time.
- Engage in historical research and analysis, evaluating secondary scholarship and primary sources in a variety of contexts.
- Craft historical questions and arguments, developing skills in written and oral communication.

Required Texts

Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present*. New York: Oxford University Press, 4th Ed, 2019.

Note: UF Libraries has an e-book of the 2003 Edition, which you may use in lieu of the 4th Edition.

Amy Stanley, *Stranger in the Shogun's City: A Japanese Woman and her World*. New York: Scribner, 2020. (Available as an e-book through UF Libraries, but you will need a hard copy for in-class discussion and writing assessments)

Akemi Johnson, *Night in the American Village: Women in the Shadow of the U.S. Military Bases in Okinawa*. New York: The New Press, 2019. (Available as an e-book through UF Libraries, but you will need a hard copy for in-class discussion and writing assessments)

Students are expected to keep up with reading assignments, which average about 75 pages per week. Reading loads will be heavier (by page count) during the weeks we read Stanley's *Stranger* and Johnson's *Night*, and lighter the weeks we are reading a selection of primary and/or secondary sources. All other readings will be made available on Canvas or through the UF Libraries. Additional primary source documents not listed on the syllabus may be distributed from time to time as necessary.

POLICIES AND RESOURCES

This course complies with all UF policies. For information on those policies and a list of campus resources, please see the following page: <https://go.ufl.edu/syllabuspolicies>

Attendance

On-time attendance is mandatory in all class sessions. All electronic devices should be silenced and put away throughout the duration of class, unless you have spoken to me about a DRC accommodation or other personal circumstances. Please bring hard copies of all the readings to class.

Unexcused absences or late arrivals/early departures will adversely impact your grade (note: absences on Thursdays will count double to account for the two-hour session).

Course Communication

Please come to office hours! I enjoy getting to know you outside of the classroom, and office hours are an especially good way to discuss your interests and concerns with the class, assignments, your major, and more.

Please check your UF email regularly, as I will use it to communicate with you about course announcements, reading suggestions, what to expect in class, etc.

Please email me directly at jgerienchen@ufl.edu. Messages sent via Canvas do not always get forwarded to my Inbox. I will typically get back to you within 24 hours; if you do not hear back within 48 hours, please feel free to send me a reminder. I may be slower to respond over the weekend.

Attendance and Participation

Attendance is mandatory and will be assessed by roll call. Students will be allowed two unexcused absences during the semester without impact to their final grade. Additional absences must be excused in accordance with UF policy. Acceptable excuses include illness, religious holidays, & military obligation. For more information on attendance policies, please visit: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Students are encouraged to employ critical thinking and to rely on data and verifiable sources to interrogate all assigned readings and subject matter in this course as a way of determining whether they agree with their classmates and/or their instructor. No lesson is intended to espouse, promote, advance, inculcate, or compel a particular feeling, perception, viewpoint or belief.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

History classes thrive on discussion, critique, and learning from one another. The class' success, and what we each get out of it, depend on our collective efforts to complete all reading assignments and come to meetings prepared to engage course materials and each other's ideas. That said, I recognize that personal, institutional, and societal circumstances may change throughout the semester and encourage you to contact me to ensure your success in this class. **Please understand that I may make adjustments to the syllabus and assignments as necessary.**

Full assignment guidelines will be provided in advance and posted on Canvas. You must complete all assignments to pass the course.

Attendance	10%	
Participation	10%	
Quizzes (3)	15%	9/9, 10/14, and 11/18
In-class essays (2)	30%	9/25, 11/6
Final exam (essay)	15%	12/11
Primary source analysis (take home)	20%	10/23

Grading Scale

93.3-100%	A	73.3-76.6%	C
90-93.2%	A-	*70-73.2%	C-
86.7-89.9%	B+	66.7-69.9%	D+
83.3-86.6%	B	63.3-66.6%	D
80-83.2%	B-	60-63.2%	D-
76.7-79.9%	C+	Below 60	E

*A grade of C- does not count as a passing grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, Gordon Rule, or basic distribution requirements.

For more information in UF's grading systems and policies, please see the [UF Undergraduate Catalog](#).

COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change)

Date	Readings and Assignments	Deadlines and Reminders
UNIT I: EARLY MODERN JAPAN		
Week 1: Introduction		
August 21	No readings	
Week 2: City and Country in Early Modern Japan		
August 26, 28	Gordon, A Modern History of Japan, Preface, Introduction, and Chs. 1–3. <u>Discussion:</u> 1. Stanley, Stranger, Chs. 1–6.	
Week 3: Family, Sex, and Gender in Early Modern Japan		
September 2, 4	<u>Discussion:</u> 1. Stanley, Chs. 7–9.	
Week 4: Early Modern Japan in the World		
September 9, 11	Gordon, Chapter 4. <u>Discussion:</u> 1. David Howell, “Foreign Encounters and Informal Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan” The Journal of Japanese Studies, Vol. 40, No. 2, 2014 2. AIZAWA Seishisai, “New Theses,” excerpt (1825)	Quiz 1 on September 9

UNIT II: MODERN REVOLUTIONS, IMPERIALISM, AND WAR		
Week 5: Civilization and Enlightenment I		
September 16, 18	Gordon, Chs. 5 and 6. <u>Discussion:</u> - FUKUZAWA Yukichi, “An Outline of a Theory of Civilization,” (1875) “An Encouragement of Learning” (1872–76), “Wealth and Fame” (1884) - Iwakura Mission Documents (1871–73) - Nishiki-e shinbun illustrated reportage of Taiwan Expedition from Tokyo nichinichi shinbun (1874)	
Week 6: Civilization and Enlightenment II		
September 23, 25	No assigned reading.	In-class Essay 1 on September 25
Week 7: Japan as Modern Empire		
September 30, October 2	Gordon, Chs. 7–8. <u>Discussion:</u>	

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Todd Henry, "Sanitizing Empire: Japanese Articulations of Korean Otherness and the Construction of Early Colonial Seoul, 1905–1919." 2. TAKEKOSHI Yosaburō, "Japanese Rule in Formosa," excerpts (1907) 	
Week 8: "Imperial Democracy" and Its Challengers		
October 7, 9	<p>Read: Gordon, Chapters 9–10.</p> <p><u>Discussion:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Miriam Silverberg, "The Modern Girl as Militant," from <i>Erotic Grotesque Nonsense: The Mass Culture of Japanese Modern Times</i>. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2009, 51–72. 2. HAYASHI Fumiko, "Diary of a Vagabond" (1930), Joan Ericson, trans. 	
Week 9: Rural Crisis and Total War		
October 14, 16	<p>Read: Gordon, Chapters 11–12.</p> <p><u>Discussion:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "A Message to Rural Youth" (1925) 2. "Youth Associations and Thought Guidance" (1932) 3. "Manchuria Beckons" (1936) 4. Sayaka Chatani, "Between 'Rural Youth' and Empire: Social and Emotional Dynamics of Youth Mobilization in the Countryside of Colonial Taiwan under Japan's Total War," <i>American Historical Review</i> 122:2 (April 2017), 371–398. 	Quiz 2 on October 14

UNIT III: POSTWAR AND POST-POSTWAR JAPAN		
Week 10: The Allied Occupation		
October 21, 23	Read: Gordon, Chapter 13	Primary Source Analysis Due on October 23
Week 11: High Growth and Its Costs I		
October 28, 30	<p>Read: Gordon, Chapter 14</p> <p><u>Discussion:</u> Johnson, <i>Night in the American Village</i>, 1–140.</p>	
Week 12: High Growth and Its Costs II		
November 4, 6	<p>Read: Gordon, Chapter 15</p> <p><u>Discussion:</u> Johnson, <i>Night in the American Village</i>, 141–280.</p>	In-class essay 2 on November 6

Week 13: The Bubble and Its Aftermath		
November 13	Read: Gordon, Chapters 16 and 17 (no class on November 11)	
Week 14: Historical Memory and Responsibility		
November 18, 20	In-class screening of Miki Dezaki, dir. "Shusenjō" (2019, 121 mins.) Read: Gordon, Chapter 18.	Quiz 3 on November 18
THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY (November 25, 27)		
Week 15: Japan in the 21st Century World		
December 2	Read: Gordon, Chapter 19. <u>Discussion:</u> Carol Gluck, "Operations of Memory: 'Comfort Women' and the World," in Ruptured Histories: War, Memory, and the Post-Cold War in Asia	
Final Exam		
December 11, 3–5 pm.		

