Course description and goals:

In the fifty years since the Japanese “Economic Miracle” of the 1960s and the pronouncement by some Western observers of “Japan as Number One,” Japan catapulted to extraordinary global influence as the motor of a new “Asian Century,” and then precipitously fell in stature during the “Lost Decades” of 1990-2010. At least this is the narrative told by the Western media, but is it true? Using an interdisciplinary approach, this course examines Japan’s recent history to explore the causes of contemporary economic and cultural malaise, as well as the sources of its enduring world influence. We begin by critically examining the shorthand terms journalists and scholars have used to identify Japan’s recent national trajectory, and then move to an overview of its modern history. In the second half of the course, we evaluate Japan’s ability to exert both “hard” and “soft” power abroad since the 1970s, in the form of military, diplomatic, economic, and cultural influence. This class offers a historical overview of modern Japan for students most interested in broadening their general knowledge of East Asia while also providing a topical analysis of the core issues shaping contemporary Japan for students writing a Japan related thesis.

Required readings:


Plus additional PDF and other digital texts as indicated on the syllabus.

Course Requirements:

Midterm exam 20%
Weekly quizzes and current events journal 15%
2 3-page papers on assigned readings 10%
“Review of the literature” paper and presentation 25%
Final exam 20%
Participation 10%

Final course grades will be assigned using the +/- system. No student will receive a passing grade without completing all of the written assignments. Late papers will be docked a letter grade for each day submitted past the designated due date.

Plagiarism

I have a zero tolerance policy for intellectual dishonesty. Confirmed cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of F for the course and potentially other sanctions by the University. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.
I: INITIAL CONCEPTS

Week 1  Jan. 25 (M)  Introductions

Jan. 27 (W)  “The Asian Century:” What is it, and what is Japan’s place?


http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2015/09/30/commentary/world-commentary/asian-century-already-petering/#.VqPP7cfuPww

Monocle soft power survey, 2014-15 (5:37 min video)

Monocle soft power survey, 2015-16 (5:07 min)


“An Asian Century” at Japan Watching Blog

http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/global-power-shift-making

http://www.thehindubusinessline.in/2005/04/16/stories/2005041600540800.htm

“Asian century” in The Hindu Business Line, 4/16/2005

Jan. 29 (F)  “The Lost Decade(s)”  Did it happen, and how has it shaped Japan’s foreign affairs?


(4) "The unseen casualities of Japan’s Lost Decades Suffer in Silence”

http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/042a592e-c283-11e4-ad89-00144feab7de.html#axzz3xycp0Q8X
II: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Week 2  Feb. 1 (M)  Japan in the world through 1900

Pyle, Japan Rising, “Introduction: The Japan Puzzle” (pp. 1-17) and “Chapter 3: The World Japan Entered” (pp. 66-97) (BB)

Feb. 3 (W)  Rise of Japanese Imperialism

Pyle, Japan Rising, “Chapter 4: Stature Among Nations” (pp. 98-136) and “Chapter 5: The Challenge of International Liberalism” (pp. 137-169) (BB)

Feb. 5 (F)  Class research meeting in Library 106E

Week 3  Feb. 8 (M)  Japan Challenges the World Order at Mid Century

Pyle, Japan Rising, “Chapter 6: Japan’s Abortive New Order” (pp. 170-209) (BB)

Feb. 10 (W)  Postwar Miracle and the Cold War

Pyle, Japan Rising, “Chapter 7: The Cold War Opportunity” (pp. 211-240) and “Chapter 8: The Yoshida Doctrine as Grand Strategy” (pp. 241-2770 (BB)

Feb. 12 (F)  Japan Ascendant?

Pyle, Japan Rising, “Chapter 9: The Post-Cold War Interval in East Asia” (pp. 278-309), “Chapter 10: Japan and the Rise of China” (pp. 310-339), and “Chapter 11: The Prospect of a New East Asian Order” (pp. 340-362) (BB)

*Statement of research topic and preliminary bibliography due

III. JAPAN’S GLOBAL CULTURAL POWER

Week 4  Feb. 15 (M)  What is “Gross National Cool”?

Allison, “J-Brand: What Image of Japan is getting sold in Japan’s gross national cool?”, (pp. 1-8)(BB)


http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2002/05/01/japans_gross_national_cool?page=full

Feb. 17 (W)  Hello Kitty and National Branding


*First 3 page paper due

Feb. 19 (F)  Food Power


George Solt, “Flavor of the Month: American Ramen and “Cool Japan”’ in *The Untold Story of Ramen*, pp. 163-77. (BB)

Week 5  Feb. 22 (M)  Anime and Soft Power


Napier, *Anime from Akira to Princess Mononoke* (BB)

Feb. 24 (W)  Anime viewing and discussion

Feb. 26 (F)  Anime in Translation

Week 6  Feb. 29 (M)  “Train man” (*Densha no Otoku*) and Otaku culture: Train Man 1


*Optional: original web conversation

[http://www.geocities.co.jp/Milkyway-Aquarius/7075/trainman.html](http://www.geocities.co.jp/Milkyway-Aquarius/7075/trainman.html)

Mar. 2 (W)  Train Man II

Mar. 4 (F)  Train Man discussion
IV: RELATIONS WITH NEIGHBORS

Week 7  Mar. 7(M)  Relations with South Korea


Dudden, Troubled Apologies (BB)

Recent Indian Express op-ed.


Mar. 9 (W)  Relations with China


http://japanfocus.net/-Gavan-McCormack/3947/article.html


Mar. 11(F)  Midterm

MARCH 14-18 SPRING BREAK

Week 8  Mar. 21(M)  Relations with India

http://thediplomat.com/2015/12/japans-high-speed-rail-breakthrough/


http://www.thequint.com/opinion/2015/12/12/aboard-on-bullet-train-but-india-needs-high-speed-network-upgrade

“Warning for Beijing: India-Japan diplomacy is a setback for China’s One Belt, One Road initiative”

http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/warning-for-beijing/

http://chellaney.net/2014/09/03/india-japan-alliance-shapes-up/

http://chellaney.net/2014/02/02/how-the-japan-india-alliance-could-redraw-asias-geopolitical-map/

http://chellaney.net/2014/01/22/japan-and-india-a-transformative-entente/

http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/node/1908
BR Deepak, “Shinzo Abe’s India Visit: How Special is India-Japan strategic and global partnership?” 12/9/2015

http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/node/1917


Mar. 23 (W) Public Diplomacy and Brand Building

Nancy Snow, “NHK World and Japanese Public Diplomacy”

Snow, 2014, “Japan Today”

Vyas, “The Japan Foundation in China”
http://www.japanesestudies.org.uk/articles/2008/Vyas.html

Galloway, “A Critical Analysis of the JET Programme”

Mar. 25 (F) GOOD FRIDAY (NO CLASS)

Week 9 Mar. 28(M) Japan, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the TPP

www.adb.org

“Why China is creating a new ‘World Bank’ for Asia” The Economist, Nov. 11 2014. (BB)


C. Fred Bergstrom, “The Trans-Pacific Partnership and Japan”
http://www.iie.com/publications/opeds/oped.cfm?ResearchID=2871

*Second 3 page paper due

Mar. 30(W) Instructor at conference (one day show documentary)

April 1(F) Instructor at conference (prep literature reviews)
Week 10  Apr. 4 (M)  Military Power: The Benefits and Limitations of Article 9


Apr. 6 (W)  Abe’s US Congressional Visit and Constitutional Revision

Port, Transcending Law, pp. 49-85, 113-123. (BB)


Plus interview in WP, and remarks By Abe and Obama in joint press conference


Apr. 8 (F)  A Shifting US-Japan Defense Relationship


Igarashi Takayoshi, “Reclamation, Licensing and the Law: Japan’s Courts Take up the Henoko Base Issue” http://www.japanfocus.org/2016/14/1/Igarashi-Takayoshi/4844.html

V. CHALLENGES AT HOME

Week 11 Apr. 11 (M)  Peer critiques of final paper

Apr. 13 (W)  Immigration and the work force

Kingston (BB) and recent press articles

Apr. 15 (F)  A Greying Society

Kingston (BB) and recent press articles
Week 12  Apr. 18 (M)  The Fukushima Incident

*Strong in the Rain*

Apr. 20(W)  Documentary viewing

Apr. 22 (F)  The enduring influence of 3/11

*Strong in the Rain* discussion

VI: OPPORTUNITIES FOR JAPAN IN THE NEXT DECADE

Week 13  Apr. 25 (M)  “Bending Adversity”?


Allison, “Pain of Life” in *Precarious Japan* (pp. 1-20) (BB)

Apr. 27 (W)  Observers weigh in


Apr. 29 (F)  Olympic Potential

(1)  [www.tokyo2020.jp](http://www.tokyo2020.jp)

(2)  [www.dezen.com/tag/tokyo-2020-olympics](http://www.dezen.com/tag/tokyo-2020-olympics)


*Final draft of lit review due*
Week 14  May 2 (M)  Student Presentations
        May 4 (W)  Student Presentations
        May 6 (F)  Student Presentations

Final Exam: Friday May 13 at 8 a.m.

The syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor, and students are responsible for adhering to these alterations.