Topics in International Politics: Japanese Politics  
POL380H1S  
Winter, 2019-2020  
Wednesday 12:00 - 14:00, BL 313

Course Description

This course introduces students to the politics, political economy, and international relations of Japan. We will cover the role of political parties, the bureaucracy, and private actors; economic development and stagnation; relations with the United States and regional neighbors. The course places a particular emphasis on contemporary challenges facing Japan, including energy policy and climate change, Japan’s contributions to the liberal international order, and Japan’s response to geopolitical challenges, such as North Korea and the rise of China.

Course Format

The course will meet once a week for two hours. A lecture will be followed by time for Q&A and discussion of contemporary issues. Students will also interact with each other through the online discussion board on Quercus.

Course Requirements

Online and In-class Participation (30%): Each student is required to make one original post and at least one reply to the online bulletin board on Quercus. The original post should demonstrate clear engagement with the readings for the week. The original post is due at 5 p.m. the day before class. The reply is due before the beginning of class. In addition, regular attendance in class lectures is required. I will set aside time at the end of lecture for discussion of postings and general Q&A.

Short Essay (20%): 500-750 words. You can choose one of two options: 1. Attend a Japan-related public event on campus during the semester (the instructor will provide a list) and write a paper that briefly summarizes & critiques the presentation; 2. Write a book review. After briefly
summarizing the key arguments of the book, provide a critique and explain how it relates to course themes and readings. The instructor will provide a list of books. Deadline: rolling, no later than 5pm on 4/10.

**Midterm Term Test (25%)**: An in-class test will be administered during the session on 2/12 covering material from the first half of the class.

**Take Home Term Test (25%)**: A take-home term test will cover material from the whole semester. Questions will be distributed at the end of the final session (4/1) and answers will be due at 5pm on 4/3. This test is optional for students who completed the midterm test: if you opt out, the midterm mark will be counted as 50%. Details on how to opt out will be made available during the week of March 23.

**Late Policy**
For the sake of fairness to students completing their assignments on time, late assignments will receive a 5% reduction after the deadline has passed. Thereafter, an additional 5% will be deducted each additional day the assignment is late.

**Prerequisites**
Although several formal prerequisites are listed for administrative reasons, they will not be enforced by the instructor.

**Readings**
All readings will be made available online on Quercus. No purchases are necessary.

**Accessibility Needs**
If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible (www.accessibility.utoronto.ca). It is not uncommon for university students to experience a range of health and mental health issues that may result in barriers to achieving their academic goals. The University of Toronto offers a wide range of services that may be of assistance. You are encouraged to seek out these resources early and often.

On Campus:  Your college Registrar’s Office, and / or Dean of Students’ Office
Student Life - [http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca](http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca)
Health and Wellness Centre - [http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/hwc](http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/hwc)

Off-Campus:  Good2Talk - a post-secondary (24/7) helpline (1-866-925-5454).
Academic Integrity

All students, faculty and staff are expected to follow the University's guidelines and policies on academic integrity. For students, this means following the standards of academic honesty when writing assignments, collaborating with fellow students, and writing tests and exams. Ensure that the work you submit for grading represents your own honest efforts. Plagiarism—representing someone else's work as your own or submitting work that you have previously submitted for marks in another class or program—is a serious offence that can result in sanctions. Speak to me for advice on anything that you find unclear. To learn more about how to cite and use source material appropriately and for other writing support, see the U of T writing support website at http://www.writing.utoronto.ca. Consult the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters for a complete outline of the University's policy and expectations. For more information, please see http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai and http://academicintegrity.utoronto.ca.

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University’s use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.
1/8: Introduction & Overview


1/15: The Postwar Political System


1/22: From Economic Miracle to Stagnation


1/29: Political and Economic Transformation


2/5: The DPJ and Abe Governments


2/12: Midterm Examination

2/19: No Class, reading week

2/26: Japan in the Liberal International Order


3/4: Guest Lecture (Consul-General Takako Ito): Japan’s Relations with Asian Neighbors


3/11: International Security


3/18: The Politics of Economic and Social Adjustment


3/25: Guest Lecture (Nicholas Fraser): Immigration and Citizenship


**4/1: Energy and Climate Change**


Shinzo Abe. 2018. “Join Japan and act now to save our planet,” *Financial Times*, [https://www.ft.com/content/c97b1458-ba5e-11e8-8dfd-2f1cbe7ee27c](https://www.ft.com/content/c97b1458-ba5e-11e8-8dfd-2f1cbe7ee27c)

Climate Action Tracker: [https://climateactiontracker.org/countries/japan/](https://climateactiontracker.org/countries/japan/)

**4/3: Take Home Term Test Due at 5pm**

**4/10: Short Essay Due at 5pm**